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BY THE AUTHOR OF

The Fishmans

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Book 1

THE TRAGIC YEARS

Dear Kaiser Wilhelm

MY mother was dead. When a boy's father was killed at the front it meant three days' vacation from school. But I was allowed to stay away a week. The whole class envied me. And they all had to stand up when I came in.

The arithmetic teacher was very moved. She said:

"Your classmate Fishman has lost his mother. It is bad enough when your father is killed in the war. But it is worse to lose your mother. . . . Be a brave boy, Fishman. You are not alone in the world, we are all with you. All right, all right, have a good cry. It will make you feel better. . . . Now you can all see what it means to without a mother. Be seated."

We sat down.

I was still crying.

The arithmetic teacher gave me her handkerchief. I had none of my own.

"You shouldn't come to school without a handkerchief," she said reproachfully.

At that time I was not quite nine years old.

My mother was dead.

And my father was a soldier. He was in the war, somewhere on the eastern front, fighting the Russians.

My classmates' envy didn't last long. The very next day we had to stand up for Seibt. We were curious to see how he would cry, for he was cross-eyed. But we were disappointed. His tears didn't turn any corners; they just rolled down like ours. Seibt had no handkerchief. The arithmetic teacher gave him one.

"You shouldn't always forget your handkerchief," she said reproachfully. "What was your valiant father?"

"Observer in a captive balloon," stammered Seibt, with a proud, cross-eyed look. "He observed the war from above. The balloon came down, but my father wasn't in it. He had fallen out. They found him later."

"Ah, how sad!" said our arithmetic teacher.

"And now I have his watch," said Seibt, with unconcealed pleasure.

"Aren't you ashamed of yourself?" said the teacher.

Art class. Gondel raised his hand and asked:

"Teacher, may I paint a gas mask?"

"No; I want all of you to paint the still life with the helmet."

And so we painted the green-grey steel helmet, with a black revolver and a dark red rose in the foreground. The rose was artificial, but the rest was real.

On our way home we learned that a British cruiser had been sunk with all on board. We shouted "Hur-r-aa-ay!" and argued whether a cruiser was more important than a submarine. We were standing in front of a gun shop. How we jeered at Erwin Salz when we discovered that he didn't know the difference between a rifle and a shotgun! We gave him a good thrashing and chased him home.

Outside a wire factory we saw men loading barbed wire on trucks.

"These cars go straight to the front," said Vollmer. "I'm positive. My mother works here."

Long-legged Giebler was not to be outdone. "And my mother," he said, "turns hand grenades. They go straight to the front too."

He turned to me. "And where does your mother work?"

"She is dead," I said, offended. He has forgotten already, I thought—why, it was only yesterday that we all stood up and the teacher told the whole class about it. . . .

We didn't regard our German teacher as quite normal, for he never beat us. The upper-graders used to whisper in the school-yard: "They only let Shoelace teach because there's a shortage of teachers."

He had been nicknamed Shoelace because his father had a cobbler's shop in the East End of town.

Shoelace always looked as if he were about to collapse or burst into tears or run amuck. During the lessons he stared at us as though he were a war widow and we his poor fatherless children.

He always came in alone, coughing. His nose was pointed and shiny. He walked furtively along the corridors, forgetting to close the doors behind him; often a cold draught would slam them—b-ban-ng! He never looked back, just ducked swiftly and peered around him wide-eyed, like a soldier seeking cover. It made us laugh.

Occasionally one of the women teachers would address him in a gentle voice, so as not to scare him. The gymnastics teacher, Herr Zunk, never spoke to him. He wouldn't so much as greet him, even though they were colleagues.

Shoelace often spoke to us about the war. He had twice been buried alive under debris at the front. "War is a hideous thing!" We didn't believe him. Nearly all his teeth were gone. That was from being gassed, he said.

One day he tore noisily into the classroom and slammed the door behind him. "Out with your copybooks—dictation!" he ordered, in an unusual, crisp voice. We were amazed. All his teeth were back in place! He no longer looked ill. He seemed energetic, in high spirits. Almost jauntily he said:

"Now we are going to write a letter to His Majesty the Emperor of Germany. Does it appeal to you?"

"Yes!" we shouted enthusiastically.

We took up our pens. Shoelace (he was unrecognizable!) jumped nimbly onto the platform, stood there facing us, and giggled.

"Will Germany win?" he asked the boy at the head of the class. As he spoke his eyes grew wide and empty.

"Yes, sir!" the boy answered briskly.

"This is what *you* look like," Shoelace retorted and proceeded to thumb his nose! We froze with astonishment, held our breath. Shoelace's green eyes had a threatening glint. He began to neigh like a horse!

"I am not crazy, boys; believe me, I'm not! I am quite well, better than ever. You can see for yourselves how well I am. My teeth have even grown back. He-he! I can even—hup!—jump up on the table. . . ." And he actually did jump up on the table and sat there with his long legs dangling! "Today I am giving you my last lesson. Listen carefully! What I am going to tell you is very important. Show the dictation to your mothers, your aunts, and to your fathers who are on leave. Show it to everybody in your house. Now—start writing!"

We sweated and gulped as we wrote. From sheer terror I made several blots in my copybook.

"Dear Kaiser Wilhelm, I see through you at last. You want Germany to rule the whole world. You want to annihilate Belgium. You want the French mines. You want to turn all Europe into a graveyard, with the Germans as gravediggers. The devil take you; he has already taken me! Once I was a hero, and fought for you. Once I was blind; now I have recovered my sight. Once I was mad; now I am sane. No; I am not crazy now, I am not crazy, I am not crazy! . . ."

Trembling with fear, we wrote these terrible sentences. Shoelace had jumped down from his desk. Big drops of sweat stood out on his white forehead. Coughing and spitting, he ran up and down the aisle. He dictated word after word in a piercing scream. He shouted straight at the Kaiser's portrait which hung on the wall to the right of him. We dared not stop our writing. Our pens scratched frightfully. Outside, somebody knocked at the door. Louder and louder. Shoelace seemed to hear nothing. He was still

shouting: "I am not crazy! I am not . . . !" Then the door burst open and in rushed Zunk, the gymnastics teacher, followed by the janitor.

Shoelace opened his mouth wide, like a mad dog. And he laughed! How he laughed!

We jumped up in excitement, our wooden seats folded behind us. Zunk, shorter by a head than the hysterical Shoelace, tried to seize him by the shoulders, but caught only his coat collar.

"Come along quickly! You're out of your mind!"

"He-he! So I am crazy after all, am I?" cried Shoelace. His face was contorted. "All right. You say I'm crazy. Fine. A crazy man can say anything he wants, can't he?"

"Quick, get him, get hold of him!"

A few women teachers stood at the open door, wringing their hands. Nobody bothered about us.

Shoelace tore himself free and ran behind his desk.

"Of course I'm crazy! I am crazy, not you! You must know that, Zunk! What have you been doing this morning, you hero? Taking another flock of field-grey sheep to the railroad? Tying a flag to your cane and shouldering it bravely like a real gun? Letting young girls stick flowers in your lapel like some poor recruit? And goose-stepping with the brass band, eh? But what brings you *back* from the station? Ah, you coward! You talk about the war; why don't you fight it? Why are you wearing a hunter's cap instead of a steel helmet, Zunk? I am out of my mind? Then I can insult everybody—you, the Kaiser, all of you. I can do it because I'm crazy—hurray, hur-ra-ay! . . ."

Finally, despite his fierce resistance, Shoelace was pushed out of the classroom. We heard him raving for a long time in the principal's office. Later an ambulance came and we heard him still shouting mad hurrays and shouting that he wouldn't set foot on the staircase because he suspected it of being a secret accomplice of Zunk and the Kaiser. The sound of his desperate panting came even to the classroom.

We sat there without a teacher, not daring to speak aloud. Some of us were so frightened that we cried—even after it was all over.

Then the janitor came in. His necktie was gone. We were dismissed.

Dvora Weiss and Others

MY foster-mother was a childless immigrant Jewess from Galicia—a so-called Eastern Jewess—named Dvora Weiss. Her husband was serving with the Austrians as guard in a prison camp. He didn't hurt his Russian prisoners, nor did they hurt him; and eventually he came back from the war unharmed. But later he broke a leg and it had to be amputated. The day this happened to him there was shooting in Germany and death roamed the streets. Yet even on such days a Jew as pious as Haskel Weiss must go to the synagogue. But that is a story to be told later.

After my mother's death, my brother Herman and I lived with Frau Weiss at 21 Castle Street, third floor front. In the cellar there were mice, and many stated positively that before the war there had been rats as well. Almost every morning through the winter two or three of the little beasts would be found dead on the cellar staircase. They lay stretched out, cold, their tails like icicles. "Poor little things! It's the war!" said the women—the same women who had always set their cats after the mice.

The landlord's name was Emanuel Stiefel. He was fifty years old, suffered from rheumatism, and was always shouting: "Just let me catch you, you little scamps!"

Behind his house there was a fine meadow, but we children were forbidden to play there. Herr Emanuel Stiefel needed the grass for his rabbits. He was a member of a rabbit-breeding association, and raised them for food.

We paid no attention to this ban. The meadow was our favourite spot. Since it was wartime, we played "world war." We ran into the near-by woods to be "scouts in the Vosges." Anna Gaal was an ambulance nurse. I was a Frenchman and they shot me dead. It was great fun.

Sometimes Xaver Wunder, the oldest of us, would announce: "The nurse is wounded," and that meant we all had to leave the woods. Wunder was the surgeon-major, and his hospital was in the bushes. We had to wait in the meadow. When the surgeon-major and the nurse, slightly embarrassed, emerged from the hospital, we, the children from Castle Street, gave them the military salute.

In Castle Street there lived a few Eastern Jews who had come to this little town in Central Germany many years before. At No. 33 lived S. Klein, the *shochet*. Occasionally, on a Friday—very occasionally—Frau Weiss would give me a bag containing a live chicken.

"Go and have it slaughtered," she would say. "But be back soon; *Shabbes* begins early today."

Herr S. Klein had come from Warsaw many years before. Warsaw was then a Russian city and Herr S. Klein was therefore Russian. When the war broke out, he received an official notice: "As an enemy alien you are ordered, beginning today, to report daily at the police station of your district." Herr S. Klein ran in terror to the police and swore by the memory of his mother Sarah Klein and his father Israel Klein—may they rest in peace in one of Warsaw's cemeteries—that he, God forbid, was no enemy alien. "Believe me, I am a friendly alien," he said, offended, and gave his landlord as a reference. But it didn't help: he had to report daily. As time went on, the police became less strict, and he had to come only once a week.

He looked like a pasha, the women declared at that time. His skin was dazzlingly white, and his woolly black beard encircled

his meditative face like the frame of a precious portrait. The shortage of males during those years drew much attention to the alien S. Klein. His wife, fat and rather slovenly, was jealous—quite without reason. The butcher had no love for her or any other woman. He loved only himself.

Every Friday a few Eastern Jewish women whose husbands were at the front would gather in his shop, bearing their dearly bought Sabbath fowl. The war had changed many things, but had little effect on Jewish customs, which remained almost the same as they had been ten, a hundred, or even more years ago, with a few modifications dictated by necessity. During the entire week people starved, but when Friday evening came even the poorest woman wanted her holiday meal. "So that the children won't forget they are Jewish, even though their father is a soldier."

Robed in spotless white, which threw into greater relief his black-framed face, Herr S. Klein stood before a vat filled to the brim with ashes. Above it he held the chicken. Dexterously he twisted the neck, cut the jugular vein. The dark blood gushed forth and soaked into the ashes. After each operation Herr S. Klein cleansed his knife and tested it on his thumb.

When the dead bird had ceased to stir, the suspicious Frau Klein, her eyes fixed on her husband, would address the customer from behind the counter: "Ten pfennigs. Don't hang around in the shop; you can see that there's no room. Don't stare at my husband. Keep your eyes on your chicken and go, please!"

She treated me differently. I wasn't a woman. "How are you? How are you getting along?" she asked me each time, and wouldn't let me go. "Sit down. I knew your mother well. Does Frau Weiss mistreat you? You don't look very fat, poor child. Does she beat you? Don't be afraid to tell me if she beats you. Well, I'm glad you're satisfied. Are you hungry? Here's a slice of bread. Don't be ashamed, take it!"

I would take it and say: "Thank you very much, Frau Klein."

"Listen!" Frau Klein would cry with delight to the women in the shop. "Listen! What a beautiful German he talks! 'Thank you very much, Frau Klein,' he says. Oi! You should keep your health and live a hundred and twenty years! A Jewish head! . . . Ten pfennigs! You may go now, Frau Wolf! . . . Well, and your brother? Come and play with my daughter some time. Why do you never come to see us?"

"I'll come tomorrow if I can," I would answer, and take the first opportunity to slip away.

What was Frau Klein's grudge against my foster-mother? If Frau Weiss had had children of her own, she couldn't have loved them more than she loved us, the little Fishmans. Even when she scolded us I felt that she meant no harm.

What a difference between these two women! The only thing they had in common was their difficulty with the German language.

"What do you want to be when you grow up?" Frau Klein once asked me. She had a way of contracting her thick face into a sweet smile that made me feel sick to my stomach.

"I want to drive an engine," I said without thinking. "Then I can go wherever I want without buying a ticket."

Frau Klein laughed so hard that she shook all over.

"A Jewish boy, and he wants to drive an engine in Germany! In Germany! Listen to that, dear people!"

The dear people in the shop were laughing too.

Frau Weiss didn't make fun of me when I told her what I wanted to be. "Very nice, not bad," she said. "I will buy you a train for your birthday."

It is true that she forgot about the train and bought me Grimm's *Fairy Tales* instead.

"Read a lot and read good German, then maybe you'll be talking German to your customers some day," she said. This was the first book I ever owned. I hadn't really expected to get the train,

anyway. Where would Frau Weiss have found the money to buy one?

After my mother's death I was often very unhappy. When other children talked about their mothers I would sit silent. I couldn't wonder, as they did: What will Mother bring me tonight? My mother was dead. And I couldn't forget her.

And yet I had forgotten so many things. I remembered less and less where I had come from and how long I had lived in this town. I was nine years old and I lived here—that was what was real to me. What had gone before was like a dream—a dream seldom remembered.

What, then, had gone before?

Two years before, the war had broken out. All of a sudden I was sitting in an open wagon with my mother, my grandfather, and my brother Herman. The peasant driver shouted "Giddap!" and "Whoa!" The place we had to leave was named Strody. We fled. Overnight we had become Galician refugees. Among innumerable other refugees we fled along the endless highways. We saw men hanging on trees. Bridges were blown up. Near us Russians fell from their agile little horses, struck by a rain of bullets that threatened us too. Once we stayed in an overcrowded refugee barracks and stole heads of cabbage out of a large Hungarian cabbage field. . . . These things were all confused in my mind. I forgot one childish experience after another, but I didn't forget my mother.

I saw her die in this little German town. And I saw how my father wept that day. Now my father was in the war. I often dreamed about him, but whenever I saw him in my dreams he was weeping. . . .

I was only nine years old, but I somehow felt that I had lost a great deal in my mother. Exactly what I had lost I didn't yet know. I never asked anyone. The only one who understood me and loved me despite my silence was Frau Weiss.

All other grown-ups were brutal and prying. Everyone who met me was sorry for me. I knew in advance that they would try to console me unless I ran away in time.

I couldn't bear Frau Klein. She kept prodding my sore spot, and I saw no reason to share my memories with her. But I never let anyone see how I felt.

Frau Wolf was another one I couldn't bear. She kept telling me what a good heart she had. She really thought so, but I didn't. She gave me cake, and still I couldn't believe she had a good heart.

Whenever she baked a cake, she sent her two sons for us. Her sons were of our age. They were furious because they knew as well as we did what was going to happen. When we arrived at the Wolfs', Frau Wolf would say to her offspring:

"The poor children! Now you see what it's like not to have a mother. No mother means no cake. You'll be sorry, if you don't obey your mother. Yes, indeed! Now give the Fishmans some cake!"

Reluctantly her children would hand us pieces of cake.

I would accept mine with a defensive gesture.

"You mustn't be ashamed," Frau Wolf would say, and begin to cry. "My own children are not ashamed. Don't I give cheerfully? I have a good heart. It's as if I was your own mother, poor woman. . . . Poor children. . . ."

To me, an hour with this woman seemed like a day with the 'devil's grandmother. I answered her in monosyllables, inwardly thinking up all sorts of mishaps for her. I was afraid to move. That was my way of sitting at a stranger's table.

"What nice manners this boy has!" Frau Wolf would say, praising me to her infuriated children. "And yet he has no mother. How is it possible?"

Once, as I was leaving the Wolfs', a young lady I had never seen before stopped me in the street.

"Aren't you little Jacob Fishman?" she asked.

"Yes, Miss, I am Jacob Fishman."

"How are you? Does your father write to you?"

"Yes, Miss, oh, yes."

"I am very glad to hear that, Jacob, I'm really very glad. Does he write every week?"

"So far he has written only once."

"I am very glad he has written to you. What did he say?"

"He sent his greetings, and asked Frau Weiss to be sure to give us warm clothes and enough to eat."

"And does she do all that?"

"Oh, yes, Miss."

"I am very glad to hear it. And is she good to you?"

"Oh, yes, Miss, very good."

"I'm awfully glad to hear that she is really good to you. And did your father write anything else?"

"Yes, Miss. He said that everything is all right."

"What is all right?"

"His health, Miss. And his life."

"Well, then I am really glad. I am very happy for the poor man. And your little brother Herman? Do you get along nicely together?"

"Oh, yes, Miss."

"That is lovely. Well, good-bye!"

"Good-bye, Miss."

I avoided grown-ups. I knew in advance exactly what they would say. It was always the same thing. I dreaded them. They existed only to torment me. Only among children did I feel at ease.

The Circus

DURING the summer of 1916 a travelling circus came to our town. One Sunday morning green and brown wagons drawn by

worn-out nags rolled down the sleepy streets and alleys. A sad-looking elephant and three thin camels trotted behind. On one of the camels rode a clown blowing a trumpet. All the windows flew open. The children, in their nightshirts, saw at once that the clown wasn't a man at all, but a woman. No doubt the circus clown, too, had gone to war. Perhaps the woman with the trumpet was the clown's war bride.

When the circus departed, it left its riding ring behind—to say nothing of a vivid impression in the memories of the children of Castle Street. In great secrecy we stole a rabbit from the landlord's shed. It was Anna Gaal's idea, so we let her be the circus-rider. It was agreed that she would ride on Xaver's shoulders. Xaver Wunder was really the manager, but for Anna's sake he was ready to play the horse.

It was Xaver, too, who dragged along a blanket and a clothes-line. We Fishmans brought an old coverlet belonging to Frau Weiss. Whoever wrapped this white cloth around his head and shoulders was an authentic "Berber from the Jungles of Africa." Anna's rabbit was an elephant and his name was "Matahama, the Indian Pundit."

We had often played the "Escape of a courageous German war prisoner" or the "Pursuit of a French spy." One of us would hide somewhere in the building, in the cellar or on one of the floors, and the others had to find him. Most of the time Anna was "it." She was an "innocent German maiden kidnapped by the English." Whoever found and freed her, married her and they were husband and wife.

But never before had we played circus. This was the first time.

High up in the rear of the house there was a kind of attic, used in winter for drying clothes and rarely entered during the summer. Later, Frau Kupke hanged herself in that attic.

Landlord Stiefel, with his stiff legs, hardly ever climbed up there. He didn't like the smell of the straw mattresses in the rear apartments of his house, and he didn't quite trust the wooden

staircase with its worm-eaten banister. This back part of the house was thoroughly dilapidated, and the cast-iron sinks were a mass of rust-spots.

In this remote attic we children were safe from the landlord. One by one we crept up the stairs.

A brightly coloured bedside rug was the ring. Xaver, the manager, stretched his clothes-line and threw the blanket over it—this was the actors' dressing tent. The entrance fees were one piece of candy for a loge, one postage stamp for an orchestra seat, one decalomania for standing room. There were four spectators, and they all sat in the standing room. When the manager appeared in person they all had to stand up. In a harsh voice he ordered them to stand, and they obeyed.

The manager slashed the dusty air with his whip and roared to his troupe: "You lazy pack of gipsies! The audience is getting impatient!" The whip was made of a big stick and a curtain rope. Our twelve-year-old manager wore a top-hat—many years ago it had served his father as a solemn head covering for his wedding. Now Herr Emil Wunder was on the battlefield, and until further notice the top-hat belonged to his son, or so at least the latter assured us.

"Hurry up and get dressed!" shouted the smallest of the spectators, my brother Herman. He stood under the slanting skylight, a patch of hot sunlight falling on his blue sailor suit. "If you don't play I want my picture back!"

Anna had nothing on but a bathing suit. She wore it all summer long because of the heat. Frau Wunder, Xaver's mother, repeatedly said that this wasn't proper, that it was disgraceful for a big girl like Anna. Frau Wunder, who lived in front, always added that she supposed people like the Gaals, who lived in the rear, knew no better.

Under my arm I carried a coat and trousers belonging to Xaver's father, and a paintbox, for I intended to make up as a real clown.

Anna carried a bundle that had once been her white Sunday dress. A year ago it still fitted her, but now, she assured us, it wouldn't even reach to her knees. A real circus-rider's costume.

The dressing tent was stiflingly hot and completely dark. I forced my way in first, then Anna crawled in, and the manager hung a tablecloth in front of the entrance to prevent the impatient audience from seeing anything in advance.

"I can't see anything in here," I shouted.

"You don't have to see," explained the manager, pulling his top-hat down over his eyes. "Now hurry up and get ready, Mr. Clown!"

I had just begun to crawl into the coat, when Anna tugged at my trousers. "Give me a kiss," she whispered. "Just like Xaver does." I already felt her mouth on my face.

I was so frightened that I fell backward and almost upset the tent.

"You don't know how to kiss," giggled the girl. "Let's have your hand."

I was terribly ashamed of not knowing how to kiss, and afraid she would laugh at me again.

"You don't know what it's all about," she whispered. More terrified than curious, I let her dispose of my fingers. Though it was quite dark I closed my eyes tight. In a total daze, I sat behind the girl.

Suddenly I jumped up. I tore away from her. The tent collapsed over us. Wildly I disentangled myself and rushed past the frightened manager and the four spectators. To the door and down the stairs. I left the house door open though that was strictly forbidden. I crawled through the fence. I ran through the meadow until I could run no longer. Then I stopped to catch my breath.

When I came home, my cheeks were burning as though I had influenza. In the middle of the summer! Frau Weiss was alarmed, and put me to bed. She made me eat thin gruel. She made a poultice for my neck, plastered me with bags of hot potatoes. "That's

what we used to do in Busk," she assured me, and let me sweat it out. She came from the town of Busk, which was once Austrian and is now Polish.

The next day I was well again. That afternoon Anna Gaal lay in wait for me. "I'll never talk to you again!" she said and pressed a letter into my hand. The letter read: "From now on I won't speak to you. A thousand greeteens and no kiss. From your Anna."

Anna was three years older than I.

I plucked up all my courage and said to her, putting the note in my pocket: "This is my second letter today. My father wrote to me, too."

"Is that so? Your father?" answered Anna, offended, and she pretended that she had no interest in my father. "What of it?"

"What about your father?" I asked, deeply hurt. "Does he write?"

"Which one?" Anna inquired, looking down her nose at me.

"How many fathers have you got?"

"Three," said Anna, proudly. "One has his picture over the sofa, but he's dead. The other's in the barracks and doesn't come any more, I don't know why. And for the last two weeks I've had a third one. He's only got one arm, but he has plenty of money to make up for that, my mother says."

Who Was the Thief?

OUR drawing teacher fell ill. We were told that the gymnastics teacher would substitute for her. We trembled even before the lesson began.

I sat between Hummel and Laber. There were only three boys

on each bench. But in our midst there sat the disturbing fear of Zunk.

He always seemed to be looking for a pretext to harass us. When he came slinking between the rows of benches, sharply watching our every movement, we ceased to be children. The war, hunger, school—all that was at once forgotten. Under his relentless stare we became an isolated group of war prisoners. Each one of us had but a single thought: If only flight were possible. Sixty anguished children's hearts were pounding in their breasts.

Zunk's narrow, suspicious eyes pierced us. All of us. But we knew that his mean look was intended chiefly for one of us. And the victim knew it too.

Stealthily Zunk crept up to my bench.

"As I suspected, it's Hummel again!" he thundered, addressing himself to my neighbour. He leapt toward Hummel, who jumped up with a jerk. "Because you want a scholarship you think you don't have to pay attention! The city has plenty of money to waste! You want to go to high school, don't you?"

"Yes, sir," answered little Hummel, standing pale and straight.

"You good-for-nothing!" Zunk slapped him in the face, pushing his head to the right. "That's what *you* get! I'll talk to the school inspector about you! Sit down!"

Now Hummel had one red cheek and one white, one burning and the other freezing. He sat down. We stared straight ahead in a frozen silence. Motionless.

Unannounced, the cold had come from the north. It had come suddenly out of the forests, and overnight had seized possession of our town, which was taken wholly unprepared. Before anyone had time to think of defence, the grim enemy had slipped into all the houses. And now its icy breath blew on the shivering people—these poor creatures who were unable to understand how it could already be winter when according to the calendar winter had no business to be here yet. That was why—they told us—there

was no coal and no coke to heat the school. Even after the winter had officially begun, we still had no coal and no coke. It was like that in wartime.

We sat in the classrooms wrapped in our winter coats and thick scarves, our hands hidden beneath woollen gloves. The poorest, in their threadbare clothes, froze the most. Hummel suffered terribly from the cold, because he had no overcoat. His teeth chattered. He sat huddled in a dark brown sweater given him by Augusta Molch, a war widow. Herr Molch had been killed at the front, and his widow no longer needed her husband's sweater. Frau Hummel had shortened the sleeves. Hummel's nose hung white and numb from his face—as though made of plaster. That was how our noses looked.

That day, all of us schoolchildren were looking forward to a message from the school inspector, hoping it would be like the year before when the classrooms had been left unheated. If the cold could save us from Zunk, it would be fine. Many of us would have run home quickly and happily. But many others, who were even colder at home than at school, would have walked slowly. Hummel was one of these.

He was ten years old. Sometimes he dreamed of running bare-foot in the warm July sun. No doubt he was dreaming now, but this time his dream turned out badly for him. He still felt the slap on his cheek, as if it had been pricked by a thousand needles. When it was cold, it hurt doubly. We had our hands folded on our desks, according to rule. The chalk grated on the blackboard.

All of a sudden the chalk stopped grating.

Outside, a sparrow pecked hungrily at the windowpane.

Zunk turned around and sternly reviewed each row. His look tried to kill the sparrow, too, but failed; the sparrow was not to be intimidated. The murderousness of Zunk's look was not conveyed to him, and he calmly continued pecking at the pane.

But several things were conveyed to us.

"Everybody in line!" ordered Zunk, and we understood.

"Attention!" he ordered, and we understood.

"Not a sound!" he shouted. That, too, we understood.

Even when he said nothing, and only looked at us, we understood. We were well-trained puppies.

Zunk had flashing, pale blue eyes—just like the Kaiser on coloured postcards. His reddish-blond moustache rose disdainfully on either side of his angular nose. The cut of his coat was tight and military. But Zunk was not with the army.

"Look this way!"

We looked at the blackboard. We had not dared do anything else for some time. He had drawn an avenue of trees. On either side of the avenue, straight as an arrow, the trees formed a menacing line. Each tree stood exactly beside its neighbour. Under Zunk's hard chalk-lines nature was easy to observe and count. Like ourselves.

Zunk called it "the order of things."

"Copy!" he ordered briefly, and gave the signal, as a platoon commander gives the signal to attack. "Begin!"

When at last the bell rang, we sixty pupils jumped up like one man. We stood stiffly erect, as in the gymnasium. Our feet were icy. The tips of our fingers, seeking the seams of our trousers through our coats, tingled with cold.

Zunk marched, sniffing, between the rows of benches. His hands were behind his back, his chin drawn in, his nose pointed straight ahead. Outside in the corridor we could hear the doors of other classrooms being flung open, but Zunk took his time.

"It's Benno Nadel of course!" he exclaimed triumphantly through his nose, and pushed his fist into the back of the ever-stooping Nadel. The blow produced a hollow sound. Nadel at once made a clumsy attempt to stand erect. Suddenly his hump was no longer on his back but on his chest. That always happened when Nadel had to stand straight. Zunk snickered with satisfaction.

"Dismissed!" He nodded patronizingly. He was now quite

cheerful. He even grinned—he had settled accounts with the hunchback Benno Nadel.

The drawing lesson was over.

Hummel walked down to the yard with the other boys. When we came back to the classroom for our arithmetic period, Laber, the farmer's son, who sat on the same bench with Hummel and me, discovered that his luncheon sandwich and two steel pens had disappeared.

The arithmetic teacher was unable to cope with a theft. She called in the strong man of the gymnasium.

Zunk yelled at the class: "I want the thief to own up!"

Nobody answered.

Zunk's face was lobster-red.

"Well, how long is it going to take you? I know who it is. I advise him to confess of his own accord. He'll get off more easily if he does! Come on, out with it!"

Nobody answered.

Zunk roared: "Lorke, Kulish, and Ruzenza, step forward!"

These were the class toadies.

"From now on, your job will be to watch out for this filthy gang. Within a week you must find the thief!"

"Yes, sir!" said all three. Then they marched back to their seats. They were proud, very proud. Had they only known what was ahead of them, and that official posts produce not only satisfaction but possible labour, vexation, and suffering as well, they would doubtless have been less proud.

"Thank you, Herr Zunk," said the agitated arithmetic teacher. She was thirty-eight years old and her nerves were sometimes unequal to the daily strain.

"If you don't obey your teacher, I'll take you to the gymnasium and exercise you until you're as green as the Russians!" threatened Zunk. As he walked out, he bowed politely to the arithmetic teacher.

"Thank you, Herr Zunk," she breathed after him.

From that moment on, Lorke, Kulish, and Ruzenza were called "the detectives." But they didn't find the thief.

Five days later, when our interest in the unknown thief had begun to wane, he suddenly struck again. A new theft! Again bread was missing! This time the bread belonged to Birk, another farmer's son.

The detectives stood crestfallen before the raging Zunk. Behind them, at attention, the whole class held its breath. But the gymnastics teacher's mouth poured forth a whirlwind of words.

"So that's what you call vigilance! That's how you carry out the trust I placed in you! Why don't you know who the thief is? Have you been asleep? An hour's detention for each one of you! That'll be a lesson to you! By Friday I want to know who the thief is! Understand? There will be no stealing here! Dismissed!"

Zunk didn't treat me any worse than other pupils to whom he was indifferent. But to a few of us he was anything but indifferent. These suffered more than I did. Poor Paul Hummel was one of them. Zunk had a scene with him at every lesson. Why? Neither Hummel nor anyone else in the class knew. Possibly Zunk himself did not know. What did he know about us, anyway? He had less knowledge of us than we had of him.

Hummel was one of the quietest boys in the class. He never wanted to be conspicuous, he always effaced himself. By right, he should have been first in the class, because he had the best marks in all subjects except singing. He was an excellent athlete, but still Zunk could not bear him. Was it because Hummel's legs were short and he was always behind in marching? He was no good at marching, but was that his fault?

Zunk asked no questions; Zunk merely registered facts. He was against Hummel, and that's all there was to it.

He soon found out that Hummel couldn't sing and that he marched badly. Consequently he always made him sing songs in

gymnastics class and made him march around in a circle, all by himself, fifty times.

"Sing the song of the good comrade, Hummel," he would say mockingly, beckoning him to come forward from the last row.

How mean Zunk was! He knew perfectly well that Hummel's singing was atrocious, and never lost an opportunity of making the boy ridiculous. And Hummel dared not resist. He cowered till he was even smaller than before, and stepped forward. All alone he would stand in the gymnasium, the immense gymnasium; painfully he would clear his throat and begin his march and his marching song. At first we laughed at him brutally and heartlessly as he gulped his way through the song. He was unmusical, and we were as cruel as only children can be. But little by little we all began to take Hummel's side against Zunk. We realized that Hummel was suffering for us. One of us had to prove to Zunk how weak we all were. Fate had allotted that role to Hummel. He was a hero. His voice was plaintive and off pitch as he sang: "I had a dear comrade . . ." and meanwhile he was thinking: "Kiss my ass, Zunk! . . ." Zunk neighed with joy and satisfaction. No mind-reader, he heard only the flattering voice. He wasn't very bright.

He liked to beat us, too. He beat us all, without exception, handing out burning slaps in the face, sharp whacks on the head, hard raps on the nose. He had devised a whole system of punishments. At every lesson, while we drilled, or hung suspended from the horizontal bar, anxiously listening, he played with his canes. He would swish them through the defenceless air, gloating over our fear. His canes were genuine bamboo.

"It is true that these sticks grow in Africa," he would explain, "but don't imagine there will ever be a shortage of them in Germany. The war may last a hundred years, but we have more bamboo canes in stock than we need! I've seen to that!" We took his word for it.

There was another whom Zunk took special pleasure in tortur-

ing: Benno Nadel. Benno Nadel was Jewish. So was I, but I was a good athlete; moreover, I had long, untiring legs for marching. I also sang well, at least until my voice began to change. But Benno was both a bad athlete and a bad singer. Besides, he was a hunchback.

"You will always be a failure," Zunk prophesied cruelly, and administered five blows with his thinnest cane. Benno bent down silent and submissive. The rest of us felt every one of those blows, which must certainly have left red stripes on Benno's flesh. But Benno Nadel stood up as if nothing had happened. He never made the slightest grimace. He always looked as if he had just been whipped, anyway. His eyes were the saddest I have ever seen. In his inscrutable, childish face they were like two remote worlds. Zunk hated those eyes—they were not his worlds.

"You obstinate pig!" he yelled in a fury when Benno failed to cry after the blows. "You will end in a reformatory. Yes, in a reformatory!"

It turned out that Zunk was not so wrong after all. Seventeen years later Benno Nadel was taken to a concentration camp. He remained there for three weeks. Then he was taken out again. Dead.

Zunk's accounts with us were evenly balanced. He didn't like us and we didn't like him. But he was not so lucky with animals. He adored animals, as he never missed a chance of reminding us. But animals didn't like him. They avoided him. They didn't know that Zunk was a member of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

Not a week passed without Zunk's addressing us on the love of animals, on *his* love of animals.

"Anyone who loves animals loves mankind too. Join the S.P.C.A. Buy the S.P.C.A. calendar. Organize for the protection of animals," he would urge us. We organized and we bought the cheap calendar.

Above all he liked horses. He sang pæans of praise to the German horse on every occasion. He would become almost poetic when he spoke of those dutiful horses who were fighting in the war, out there with the field-grey soldiers, bearing brave riders on their backs, pulling enormously heavy cannon. He spoke with less enthusiasm of the old nags busy ploughing fields in the hinterland and bringing home the harvest. But from time to time they, too, were mentioned.

Zunk was distasteful to all animals alike. The hungry pigeons in the schoolyard would sit still when one of the boys or women teachers approached them, but they took wing in terror when Zunk, the official friend of animals, hence also of pigeons, came near. Cats would jump away from him into the nearest doorway. Dogs would pull in their tails and whimper when he whistled at them; they could not bear the smell of him, and if he succeeded in catching one, it would writhe on the ground as though poisoned. His own dog was the quietest and most intimidated cur in the entire town. Zunk's canary died without ever having sung a note. Zunk was faced with an enigma: animals did not realize his love for them! Animals have no understanding, he thought with pity—for he was full of pity. He spent so much effort on animals, too. Did the animals perhaps sense, instinctively, the fate of Zunk's poor dog, Bebel? Bebel was the name of a German Socialist leader, as I learned later, and by naming his dog Bebel Zunk in some measure avenged himself against an idea that he deeply hated.

On November 9, 1918, when the Republican and Red banners were hoisted in the town, he shot the tortured animal. Perhaps he was afraid that Bebel would begin to talk. He probably had a bad conscience, Zunk with his small soul. . . .

The three detectives had to serve their hour's sentence on Wednesday afternoon.

Zunk made them draw chickens as a punishment. He first

sketched a model chicken on the blackboard. With visible satisfaction he gave it a thin chicken head. On its back he drew five lines to indicate feathers. They looked like the ribs of a broken umbrella.

"The wings!" he said sternly, pointing at these lines.

Two descending lines represented the legs. The body of the chicken looked like a battered tin can.

"Within the next hour each one of you must draw that chicken twenty times!" And he went out, closing the door behind him.

The three detectives hastily decided to draw thirty chickens each in the hope of appeasing Zunk. Ninety angular chickens were goose-stepping across the three drawing books when Zunk returned.

He cast a glance at this mass parade of chickens, and said, somewhat more amiably than usual: "Well, you have until Friday. Keep your eyes open, and you'll get the criminal!"

"Oh!" cried long-legged Ruzenza on the way home. "Oh!" he cried in exasperation.

"It must be somebody that comes to school without bread," opined Lorke, tossing an imaginary football in the air. Lorke, round as a ball himself, was nicknamed Pudge.

"When we catch him we'll make him pay for our detention," declared Ruzenza, stuttering with excitement.

"Oh, yes," rejoiced little Kulish.

"Got to catch him first," said Pudge and threw a stone at a lamppost. He missed the post, but hit the lamp and the glass broke into a thousand pieces. The boys ran off as fast as they could.

"We'll get him sure," said Ruzenza when they finally reached a side street.

"Maybe," said Pudge doubtfully, picking up another stone.

"We'll get him sure," declared Ruzenza, this time a little nervously. He seemed to have taken the thing to heart.

"In two days," said Pudge, "it will be Friday."

Thursday. The ten o'clock recess. The classroom was empty. Only two boys had remained upstairs. Ruzenza, who looked as if he were growing out of his suit by the day, stood by the window and furtively spied into the yard. Below, a circle of children was revolving. The regulations ran: "During recess games are forbidden. The pupils will form in pairs and march in a circle." Here and there a boy marched alone. The lonely marcher was either hunchbacked, or redhaired, or he stammered, or for some other reason nobody wanted to walk with him. Possibly he had a comical name, like Knoblauch, or he was a Jew and there was no other Jew in the class, or else he might be first in the class and feel too superior to walk with another pupil for ten minutes. This recess—supposedly intended for a snack—meant for all of us time out for hunger.

The other boy who had remained upstairs was hidden under a bench. It was Pudge.

Now the door was opened very cautiously. Somebody tiptoed in and came to the bench under which Pudge was keeping watch. It was Kulish.

"It's me," he said to Pudge, who, beginning today, was chief detective. "Bock, Nolte, Hummel, Fuchs, and Salzmann have no breakfast," he reported in a whisper.

Pudge nodded in contempt. "Those five never bring any bread to school," he said. Crawling on all fours to Ruzenza, he peeked down and reported: "Now Handtke is giving Bock a piece of bread!"

"The Handtkes have a bakery, they have as much bread as they want," muttered Ruzenza. "Even without bread cards."

"That's not true! They have to have cards, too," Pudge contradicted. "I know, because they told us so one time when we wanted to buy bread without cards, and they wouldn't give it to us." He crawled back under his bench.

"You don't need cards," Kulish replied. "Every week we get some extra bread without cards. Only our Emmi always has to go

through the back door after dark. And we mustn't tell anybody."

"My mother says that people with money can get everything," said Ruzenza.

"Last week we even had omelets," Kulish announced proudly.

"I don't like omelets," said Pudge.

"You say that only because you can't get any," Kulish retorted. "You have to go without eggs because you're poor."

"That's a lie!" Pudge protested passionately. He strode to the window. "Maybe we have more money than you!"

"But my mother said you're poor," Kulish assured him eagerly. "You borrow flour and margarine from everybody and you forget to give it back, my mother says."

"Shut up! That's not fair! If you say it again I'll make hash out of you!" snarled Pudge, jumping toward the retreating Kulish.

"Some detectives you are!" grunted Ruzenza. "Are you going to start fighting now?"

"I'm not going to stand for it." Pudge was hurt. But he didn't attack Kulish.

"What's true is true," whispered Kulish. "Anyway, how can you be a detective when you don't bring any bread yourself?"

"You crook! You lousy crook! I eat my bread on the way to school!"

"I don't believe you," Kulish assured him frankly, backing up against the wall for safety. "You're just as poor as Bock and Hummel. My mother said the thief is somebody that comes to school without breakfast, somebody like you."

"You just wait." Pudge's face went white; Kulish ducked out of reach. "I'm going to report you to Herr Zunk! You just wait!" Pudge threatened.

Kulish waited anxiously all morning, but Zunk did not call him. "So Pudge didn't tell on me." He was greatly relieved.

"Pudge is a coward! Watch him, maybe he's the thief," he declared to Ruzenza, who listened but expressed no opinions of his own.

On the way home, after class, the three detectives met again.

"Tomorrow is Friday," groaned Ruzenza. "If I could only get sick!"

"I don't like this business any more," said chief-detective Pudge. He looked only at Ruzenza and avoided talking with Kulish.

"We've got to find the thief," growled Kulish. "And I believe I know who he is."

"Don't you feel well?" Pudge asked Ruzenza.

"I'm sick," he answered.

"And this afternoon we have a gym class with Zunk," sighed Kulish.

Zunk set out on his way to school. Straight as a candle he marched down the street, proud of himself, a man accustomed to command, every inch of him a German gymnastics teacher.

This is Zunk's story:

His father was a brickmaker, and his father's younger brother was the owner of the brickyard. Each of these brothers had got out of life exactly what he had earned.

Zunk's father was a lazy, envious sort of man. In contrast, the uncle was a born optimist, a regular fellow. He was clever, possessed normal instincts, and was never idle. Through his wife he came into both money and the brickyard. It was all perfectly straight. He married for love, and his bride had never concealed the fact that her father owned a brickyard. The young man had assured her that though he was the manager of a socialist co-operative it made no difference, since he was marrying her, not her father. That his father-in-law retired and that Zunk became a brickyard owner overnight—well, that was just because the old man liked him. Life sometimes indulges in such fairy-tales; some people just don't want to believe it. But this story is not invented. He worshipped his wife, as the saying goes, even after her property had become his own. And he continued his membership in

the co-operative, although he was now the owner of a brickyard. Essentially he did not change, only he made more money than before, and spent more. His relatives, however, changed radically. Fortunately he had only three of them: his brother, his brother's wife, and their son.

This brother, Zunk's father, moved with his family into rent-free lodgings in the brickyard and became a brickmaker. Little by little he learned the trade.

The brickyard owner lived with his wife in a new house at the other end of the factory, a larger and prettier house than the brickmaker's free lodgings. His wife's dresses and hats were more expensive and stylish than her sister-in-law's. Now and then he entertained in his beautiful house, but, as he sometimes wanted to be alone with his guests, his brother and sister-in-law were not always invited.

"Nice brother he is!" Zunk's mother would say when speaking of the brickyard owner, or: "Your brother, the Red," hinting derisively at the co-operative. Vexation brought lines to her face; her envy, anger, and disdain made it impossible for her ever to say a good word about her brother and sister-in-law.

In the shadow of the big brickyard and the beautiful house, both belonging to his rich uncle, our Zunk grew up as a poor relation. Such a childhood can make a man into a revolutionary or an ambitious bourgeois or a dangerous fool. A childhood spent in the shadow of somebody else's beautiful house would affect anyone's life. But in the case of Zunk, as in the case of his father and his uncle, the circumstances did not account for everything. There was predisposition as well. Zunk's predisposition was none too promising.

Nevertheless his uncle wanted to do something for him, and, unfortunately for us, he set him on the road to becoming a teacher. Opening up that career for his nephew, however, did not win him any gratitude. Every time his uncle was kind to him, Zunk, like

his mother (who had died in the meantime) thought: "A nice uncle!" and: "Of course, a Red!" For his uncle was still a member of the co-operative.

Shortly after the death of the brickmaker, who had lived an embittered and discontented life because that was what he liked, Zunk obtained his first position as schoolmaster in a little village.

But country life and the monotony of his profession were not exactly to his taste. The cackling of the geese that accompanied him on his way to and from school got on his nerves. The barking of the village dogs pursued him in his dreams. It is true that he was a friend to animals, but he didn't like dogs who refused to obey his orders, barking without being asked to or disrespectfully trying to escape from their runs. It is true that he also loved horses, but he didn't love the smell of their sweat. He was thoroughly dissatisfied with his life, and blamed it all on his brick-manufacturing uncle. This uncle's son was now a student in the technical college at H——, while he, Zunk, was condemned to live among inarticulate farmers, their dull offspring, and their cackling chickens. As he walked in despair over the rolling meadows, Zunk looked so much like his late, embittered parent that he could easily have been mistaken for him.

One Sunday, when the church-bell had stopped ringing and the meadows, the woods, and the village's one street had that deserted look characteristic of the Sabbath, the good-natured local pastor invited the teacher to dinner. This Protestant pastor was a glutton before the Lord, and revelled in all the good things of life. He was a happy man, slightly fat and with a ruddy nose, and not yet too old to enjoy his wife's excellent cooking.

They were served a roast goose, surrounded with Thuringian potato dumplings stuffed with fried bread-crumbs. Inside the goose were fragrant apples glazed with their own juice and dripping with the rich fat of the lusciously gleaming roast.

Before carving, the pastor gazed at the goose and the dumplings

with love and veneration, then took up the bone-handled knife and fork and went to work. The tender bird carved effortlessly. With almost religious ecstasy the host cut off the legs from the well-rounded trunk, and dissected the rest of the luscious bird. With his own hands he carefully arranged the brown bones with their padding of soft meat and the big, round dumplings on the hot plates, and poured over them the steaming golden-brown gravy. And finally, with an expression mingling willingness to honour his guest with regret at the personal sacrifice he was about to make, he gave Zunk the parson's nose; the whole ceremony was accompanied by a stream of waggish and whimsical remarks on the part of the host. Only then did he give himself up entirely to his food, handling knife and fork like two musical instruments, contentedly smacking his lips, and now and then, between mouthfuls, expressing his satisfaction to his wife, who sat opposite him, munching wearily. And while he was thus busy separating the tender meat from the softly cracking bones he talked about eating, about numerous varieties of vegetables, and about omelets with red bilberries concealed in their folds. Even as he sucked the remaining bones of the goose, he spoke rapturously of a trout he had eaten a year before, that had been served with parsley potatoes sautéed in brown butter.

And what did his guest, Zunk, talk about? He talked about his life, bungled because his father had been a victim of "persecution" and his uncle a "Red." This uncle had made his own son into an engineer, but had "forced" his nephew to become a teacher. There's a relative for you! Quite aside from the fact that he, Zunk, had proved himself an able inventor! One day, he prophesied, the brickyard would be quite surprised!

"Inventor?"

"Inventor!" said Zunk arrogantly.

And with that he went home.

When the pastor noticed, after his departure, that Zunk had

hardly touched the parson's nose, he had a "heart-ache" as his South German wife called it, and swore never again to invite that young imbecile, that *ignoramus*, who knew nothing about food.

Back in his room, Zunk looked fatuously at his inventor's face in the mirror, oiled his youthful moustache and, to give it the then patriotic upward direction, put on his moustache curler. Thus he stood by the window and gazed dreamily into his golden future. He had recently had a great piece of luck: he had invented an extensible children's shoe with removable soles! He had hit upon this idea one day while idly recalling his childhood and the eternal complaint of his hard-pressed parents: "You hardly try your new shoes on before they're too small!" When he remembered this, he sat down and invented an extensible children's shoe. As things stood at present, ten manufacturers had returned his invention with thanks and with the practical observation that his "Zunk" shoe would cost ten times as much to produce as an ordinary children's shoe, its advantages, therefore, being far outbalanced by its disadvantages. But Zunk was certain that such answers were given by manufacturers who bore a closer resemblance to his uncle than to himself. Therefore he was not discouraged, and sent his invention to five other shoe factories, accompanied by accurate drawings and return postage.

It was not his invention of an extensible shoe, however, that was to play a part in his future, but rather his sketch for a new two-hundred-mark note. One day he had sent this sketch to the Reich Finance Office, and had received in reply a letter from someone who apparently had an ironical turn of mind. But Zunk failed to sense the mockery concealed behind the official phraseology; his literal mind understood no irony. The spokesman for the Finance Office rejected Zunk's sketch in an amiable tone, concluding with an ambiguous expression of gratitude for the sender's interest in German banknotes.

This letter happened to be on Zunk's table one day when the school inspector made his visit to the village. The inspector had

never received a letter from a ministerial office and was deeply impressed at the sight of the dignified and important-looking sheet of paper. Like Zunk, he had never come into contact with irony, officially or unofficially. The contents of this letter, though constituting a refusal, appeared to him most promising for the young man's future, and he inquired with great interest as to the age, family, and health of this seemingly gifted village teacher. And when, to his brief question: "Married?" Zunk replied with equal brevity: "Bachelor," he made no effort to conceal his joy.

"That is in your favour," the inspector said mysteriously, and added: "I'll keep you in mind, young man."

The inspector was a reliable man. He kept his word. One day an official letter informed the village teacher Zunk that he was slated for the position of an assistant teacher in the city. A special note in this letter summoned him to pay his respects to the inspector.

Zunk called on the inspector one Wednesday afternoon in the year 1910. Garbed in his dark blue Sunday suit, he was received by a grinning maid in the parlour of the all-powerful official's apartment. The inspector's first question was: "Have you received any further news from the Secretary of Finance, young man?"

Taken off his guard, Zunk stammered a vague and ambiguous answer, not knowing how much depended on this question.

The second question could be answered clearly and unequivocally: Zunk was still unmarried.

Only after these preliminaries—which the inspector apparently considered of great importance—was Zunk asked to sit down. Ill at ease, he sat on the green velvet sofa, smoked the cigar that was offered to him, accepted with a deep bow and a most humble expression of gratitude the news of his definite transfer to a city public school, and thereupon was introduced to the widowed inspector's only daughter. Zunk cast hardly a glance at her. Had he known that this daughter would soon become his wife, he probably would have looked at her more carefully, despite her plain-

ness. She was seven years older than he, and her lack of eyebrows and eyelashes could not be considered exactly a physical asset. But Zunk failed to notice these things, for the good reason that he did not trouble to look at her. She, on the other hand, found it difficult to take her eyes off of her father's visitor. The thick-set, robust, reddish-blond Zunk was quite an impressive figure. His chest was powerful, his voice commanding and his eyes piercing, and, above all, his ambition was boundless. (The brickyard will be surprised!) The little golden badge on his watch chain bearing the inscription "Ever upward" was not a mere ornament.

The wedding was unpretentious. The brickyard owner came without his wife, bringing a cheap china dinner-service of seventy-six pieces.

That evening, Zunk—his first names were Friedrich Wilhelm August—was destined to learn that his wife Victoria suffered from varicose veins, among other things. She had concealed that ailment, as well as her other bodily charms, from him by means of her skirts, then fashionably long, and her gleaming white wedding dress. But the moment came when she had to take her dress off. Then Zunk saw the varicose veins.

Shortly before, as the wedding meal drew to a close, he had proudly stuck a final cigar into his mouth.

Then he rose.

He thought he knew what was ahead of him. But he didn't.

The bride was sweating with fright.

Zunk's hair, parted exactly in the middle, had a dull sheen. The back of his head was shaved.

"I wish you much pleasure, my dear nephew Friedrich Wilhelm August," said Zunk's uncle with no pleasure at all in his voice, and he whispered to the young bridegroom: "Is it all right for the representative of your family to go now?"

Zunk, in the same whisper, said: "He can go to hell, for all I care!"

With senile giggles, the inspector kissed his daughter's feverish forehead and murmured:

"Courage, my daughter! Courage, Victoria! Do honour to your name!"

It may be categorically stated that Zunk never recovered from his experiences of that night.

In 1913 he passed his examination as a gymnastics teacher. A year later, when German manhood went to war, he was not called to duty. In every German town a few Zunks remained at home. The authorities seemed never to summon those educators who, they knew, would bring up the youth with severity. Zunk brought us up with severity. And the authority who knew that he would was the school inspector, his father-in-law.

With Zunk, the "scamps" were put through the mill. We were the scamps. When he made us sing while marching, every sound came out of our lungs like an invincible soldier. Every measure was a crashing parade. The whole song was an army setting out to fight for the fatherland. But Zunk himself did not set out. He remained with us children. His objective was not Paris. His objective was promotion to a high school.

On his father-in-law's advice, he prepared, during "Germany's hardest times," for the drawing teacher's examination. Armed with untiring diligence and a wooden ruler, he attacked nature as though it were created for him to attack, and was marked "excellent" in his drawing examination. He painted flowers and he painted animals. He would first draw their contours in hard, thick lines; behind them he would then imprison his unfortunate subjects. His drawings always looked in the beginning like scaffoldings, and at the end like prison bars. No flower, no animal, could escape him. On his sheets of paper, roses and tulips lay as in strait-jackets. Bony cocks with enormous crests, standing among rigid blades of grass, looked like enchained convicts.

In April 1918, Zunk learned in advance, thanks to his father-in-law, that he was to be transferred to the *Realgymnasium*. He rubbed his hands with satisfaction. An attractive career lay ahead of him. (The brickyard will be surprised!) He proudly stuck out his chest and ordered the class to run around the gym.

"That will keep you warm! Forward, march! Forward! Stop! Bend your knees! On tiptoes! Heels up! Hands on hips! One, two! One, two! One—stop! Rest!"

We wanted to advance our right foot a little. But already he was yelling again: "Attention! Right face! Form ranks! Count!"

"Onetwothreefourfivesixseveneightnine . . . !"

"Stop! It's Benno Nadel, again! What d'you mean, 't-ree'? Th-th-ree, say th-th-ree! Begin again!"

"Onetwothreefour . . ."

Thus Zunk stood in front of us, swinging his posterior with sovereign pride, his orders showering down on us like fist-sized hailstones.

Again and again he commanded us to stop, to march, to bend our knees, to count. He drilled us as if we were recruits to be licked into shape for war. And yet we were only boys from eight to ten years old.

"And Friday at the latest I want to know who the thief is!" he shouted before his final command. "Dismissed!"

On Friday Kulish and Ruzenza were absent. Both had sent in excuses.

Kulish's mother wrote that her boy had the grippe. "And you know, Herr Principal, that my Ottomar doesn't get it often. Most respectfully yours, Berta Kulish, *née* Menke."

Ruzenza's mother wrote: "Will you please excuse my son Albert's sickness. Mrs. Ruzenza, Albert's mother."

She did not say what Ruzenza's sickness was.

Frau Ruzenza, Albert's mother, sat in her kitchen. All alone she sat at the bare table. Never before had she felt so lonely, never

in her whole life. For a long time she had been dressed to go out, but still couldn't make up her mind to leave the house.

It's so hard, she thought wearily, and how shall I begin, and what shall I say, and why does God inflict this punishment upon me, as if to be without my husband were not enough, and now Albert has to do this to me. . . .

But what's the use complaining, it's the war, and we women are all alone with our misery and worries, and children who do such things to you, no, who could have expected it from my Albert, from whom did he inherit that, surely not from his father, he was always so honest and decent, and not from me, either, it's so terrible, so terrible. . . .

At first she had refused to believe him when he confessed that thing, that terrible thing, to her, because his schoolmate Kulish knew it, anyway; at least he had told Albert that he knew who the thief was. She had beaten him until her arm ached, poor boy. . . . She had given him such a thrashing that in the end he only whimpered and she felt sorry for him. And was this wretched thing his fault? Hadn't he said that he was hungry, that he was hungry every day, and the other boys brought whole packages of food to school? But how was she to manage? Whatever she gave him wasn't enough, he grew so fast. Where was she to find all the money and all the food? . . .

The day before, as she sat at his bed and stroked his tearful face to comfort him, he had told her: "Every day Laber has a slice of sausage as thick as that on his bread, and when I saw it I wanted it so bad I couldn't resist. But I only took Laber's, not the other one, not Birk's. I swear it, Mother, that was somebody else. . . ."

She believed him. But even so, it was bad enough. Now Albert was asleep. During the night she had decided to go to the school and tell everything. Her child mustn't be unhappy for the rest of his life over a thing like that. She would forestall Kulish and speak frankly to the teacher. She would pluck up all her courage. Is it a crime when a child like her Albert has a craving for some-

thing? Must Laber wave his sausage in everybody's face? It's a great injustice that in these sad times some people can afford to gorge themselves while we others are starving. How could my poor, poor Albert resist? And all the others? Who knows what terrible things they have been doing, and why must my Albert be burdened with all the guilt, for all the others? It's not fair.

She hadn't slept all night. And now she had to go. It was absurd to sit like that; after all, she was his mother, who else was there to take the hard course for him? . . .

She went to the mirror and saw her face disfigured by tears. She looked old today, she looked fifty though she was less than thirty. But that's not surprising, she thought, with this life of drudgery, always toiling for strangers, always driven like a slave, always scouring, mending, washing, ironing, always cleaning after strangers, but never any time for my Albert, he's growing up without a father, and I'm never home, I have to earn a living, don't I, please believe me, Miss, believe a poor heart-broken mother, my boy isn't really bad at all, I thrashed him half dead, please believe my words, after all I can't do more than work hard, please don't do anything to him, I promise he won't do it again, I promise he won't do that terrible thing again, he gave me his word and he solemnly swore and he howled so hard I thought I had broken something inside of him, and maybe it's all my fault, what can a child know about these hard times, what's allowed and what isn't. . . .

Poor Frau Ruzenza's mind was all confusion when she finally left her house. Her eyes, so keen to detect the dirt in other people's houses, were full of anguish. Her knees sagged, and the nearer she came to the school, the more her painfully drummed up courage ebbed. When she appeared at the door of the classroom and spoke to the arithmetic teacher, her voice was scarcely audible.

"It's about Albert . . . I would like to speak to you."

"I will be back right away," the teacher told us, and accompanied Frau Ruzenza to the corridor.

Great excitement in the classroom. Everyone thought Ruzenza was gravely ill, or dead. The sound of Frau Ruzenza's weeping in the corridor quickly restored silence to the room.

"You must believe me," we could hear her sob.

"Be calm," said the teacher.

"Your explanations are absurd," we could hear Zunk saying in a solemn voice, "but we shall try again," he added soothingly.

"I thank you with all my heart!" cried Frau Ruzenza. "And there is this war and he is so big for his age, he is almost as big as I am. . . ."

"Everything will be all right. There is nothing to worry about," said the arithmetic teacher, and then the voices faded down the hall.

When the teacher returned to our room, her nose was red.

"Is Ruzenza dead?" ten curious pupils asked at once.

"Oh, no, not at all! What an idea!" exclaimed the teacher, taken aback. "He's just ill. He'll be back on Monday!"

Then she left the room again and went to "Threadline," the principal. She was sorry, but it was her duty to report what she had heard.

The Moon and the Stars

THREADLINE was the most crotchety teacher in the school. Many years before the war this shrivelled little man had retired, but when the mobilized teachers had exchanged their rattans for swords, he again placed his pedagogical capacities at the disposal of warring Germany, despite his advanced age.

At first he limited his efforts to assuring us, in penmanship class, that our lives were doomed to "shipwreck" because we didn't even understand the difference between a hairstroke and a downstroke.

He quite seriously maintained that the world was built on hair-strokes and downstrokes. Woe to him who imagined that he could disregard that iron law!

At that time the hospital across from the school was full of maimed soldiers with horrible wounds and limbs reduced to pulp, blind, deaf, miserable cripples. They interested us more than the school assignments.

In time, however, Threadline came to think that there were more important things than strokes to bother about. For instance, our hair.

He began to examine our hair daily. At first he did it silently, as if he had to go slowly in exploring a new field of activity. Then he came out with his ideas. He was against parting the hair, and said: "Aren't you ashamed? Are you girls? What are you, in fact?"

That day was one of rejoicing for those pupils whose hair was not parted. They laughed maliciously. The thing didn't concern *them*, they thought. But Threadline flashed a poisonous look at them, and said: "Don't laugh too soon! Your turn will come too!"

His campaign against the parted hair of his pupils was a well-planned and ruthless war. His own war. At every lesson he attacked a new "hair-regiment" as he called it.

He was against smooth hair. He forbade our hair to flutter in the wind. But he also forbade it to lie flat in the wind.

He was against curly hair. He was against neatly combed hair. He was against dishevelled hair. He loathed long, bristly hair. He execrated the smell of lotions and uttered ugly threats against "pomaded heads."

"There will soon be an end to all that!" he promised us, frowning fiercely.

And then a day came when he ordered all of us to have our hair cut within three days!

"Clean-shaven to the scalp," he commanded. "At the most you may leave two millimetres of hair, no more! Are you better than

our brave soldiers? No comments! The next time I see you, your girlish locks must be gone. Otherwise you'll get it from me!"

Alarmed by his command, all the mothers, aunts, and grandparents hurried to the school. They objected timidly—but Threadline defeated them. What is the matter? he asked. What are you objecting to?

"The children cry."

"They cry?"

"Yes, the children cry."

"German children do not cry!"

He fixed the grown-ups with a penetrating stare. His high forehead, so it seemed to those present, grew higher and higher, wider and wider, extending into a massive yellowish, hairless scalp. Before this phenomenon all protests were silenced. The silent mothers, aunts, and grandparents, including my own foster-mother, went home thoroughly cowed. Could they lodge a complaint? In times such as these? And with whom? Only with the principal. And Threadline, the oldest teacher, was substituting for the principal. So we had to submit to the hair-clippers.

In the schoolyard, the other classes made fun of us. Everybody said that Threadline, with his brilliantly shining scalp, was the moon and that we were the stars.

Soon after that, Threadline attacked our ears, necks, fingers. At the beginning of every penmanship lesson, we had to report to his desk in groups of ten. He sniffed us, and peered at us through his nickel spectacles, and anyone who in his opinion was not as "neat as an army tunic" had to step out. Thus he formed "refractory companies." He sat in his chair, and the poor victims had to pass by him, stretching out their hands like beggars to receive their punishment—five to ten blows with the ruler on the fingertips or the palm; the blows were accompanied by such exclamations as "God punish England!" or "A hundred Russians for every Prussian!" or "Only the French make a stench!" If you pulled back

your hand, you got a "double ration." And after the punishment each boy had to say in a loud and distinct voice: "Thank you, Herr Steinhilber"—that was Threadline's real name.

He particularly hated nail-chewers. As in this time of hunger the whole class consisted of nail-chewers, we all had to march past him. After the parade, our aching hands traced thin hairstrokes and thick downstrokes so that we might suffer no "shipwrecks" in our lives.

Emanuel Stiefel's Tenants

IN 21 Castle Street, too, much was going on in those years of the Great War. Three times daily the women in that house would tremble with fear, three times daily a wretched nervousness would overcome them and make them fling their windows open and lean far down into the street so as to have a better view. Many would even run downstairs to the nearest corner, because they could not bear waiting in their empty apartments. Three times daily this wave of anguish rolled through all the floors, front and rear. Every day it happened in that house, and in all the other houses of our town. And it lasted for four years, four long years. Yet the woman who carried the mail was herself quite harmless. It was not her fault that she was awaited with so much apprehension and fear. It was certainly not her fault that the men were at war and that she brought postcards and letters from the front, from the trenches and hospitals, or that she brought nothing at all. And was it her fault that sometimes she had to carry the dreaded official notices? Whenever she came the women trembled with fear.

That the mail-carrier was a woman, that too was the war. And the yellow official letters, they were the war, too.

Whenever the sound as of someone falling was heard from be-

hind a door, the people in the house would say: "The yellow envelope? To whom did she bring it today?"

One day it was: "The Wunder family."

"Are you sure?"

"Quite sure. Only the Wunders scream that way."

"So she, too, is a war widow."

"And little Xaver has no father any more."

The landlord Stiefel with his wife and daughter, and the plump midwife of the first floor, Frau Schade, went downstairs to wait for the postwoman.

"Yes, Emil Wunder was killed at the front," she confirmed. "And Herr Handtke from across the street was killed, too. I just handed them the letter."

"Handtke, the baker? But he was our champion marksman! And he was killed?" the landlord's divorced daughter exclaimed incredulously. "He could shoot so well! How could that happen?"

"The others knew how to shoot, too, that's why," Frau Schade muttered impatiently, but kept to herself what she thought of that stupid goose. . . .

That had happened eight months before. For a whole week Frau Wunder did not cease repeating to all her acquaintances how much, ah, how much she had loved her poor Emil. She wore a long black veil. Though no one found anything wrong in that, or tried to dissuade her, she pointedly told everybody that no one would succeed in preventing her from mourning her poor Emil. Xaver immediately had a new suit made of an old one belonging to his dead father. The sleeves were too wide, the buttonholes too far apart, the material was dark brown. It made him really look like an orphan. . . . And then, yes, just then the Wunders took in a roomer, a certain Herr August Heider, fifty-six years old, a railroad employee and a widower. In spite of that, the Stiefels thought him a "good-for-nothing." But they said that about everybody in the house. And everybody in the house said the same about the Stiefels. . . .

Frau Schubert's husband came home on leave. But there was something funny about it somewhere. In Ida Gaal's apartment, in the rear, the matter was talked over in Anna's presence, Anna pretending all the while to be absorbed in her homework but not missing a word of the conversation between her mother and Frau Zipfel, a slightly deaf neighbour.

"Mrs. Schubert has been sick for a few days," Anna's mother said in a loud voice, meanwhile scratching her scalp with her knitting needle.

"Serves them right, the young women of today," opined Frau Zipfel, stroking her thin tomcat, who was asleep on her lap. "It's all their own fault."

"I don't believe it!" cried Frau Gaal, and thought: The old girl's pretending to be stupid but she knows perfectly well what's going on there. . . .

"Just take a look some time when the Schubert woman is doing her washing," growled Frau Zipfel. "We wear woollen underdrawers, but she has to have lace ones. No wonder she caught a cold from below. . . . Isn't that so, Peter?" addressing her cat.

"It's her husband's fault!" cried Frau Gaal with conviction.

"You think so? How is that?"

"Now don't pretend that you don't know anything! The whole house knows it, Frau Zipfel!" urged Frau Gaal.

"All I ever see is my little Peterle," said Frau Zipfel with a crafty feline look. "How would I know what's the matter with the Schuberts?"

"But her husband is sick!" Frau Gaal exploded, with a nervous laugh.

"Well, what's so funny about that?" Frau Zipfel asked disapprovingly.

"Oh, of course, it isn't funny at all, it's really very sad for her, she was so pleased to see him back. But something happened to him out there, and he can't tell what it is, he says. For two nights his poor wife cried and then she had a nervous breakdown. That's

what it is and not the lace underwear she's always hanging out to dry."

"Anna," said Frau Zipfel, giving her the key to her apartment, "Anna, dear, will you please go and get me my glasses?"

Anna knew all about me and I knew all about Anna. We were friends again and had no secrets from each other.

For instance, I knew that Anna was the mysterious cellar thief. At night she crawled through the loosened boards of the door to Stiefel's cellar, went inside, and threw coal and potatoes to her mother, who kept watch outside. Then they both sneaked back across the dark yard. The next day they peeled the pilfered potatoes, cooked them over the pilfered coal, and brazenly ate them with much gusto at the wide-open window.

Stiefel raved and called the police, who were not at all disturbed about the matter. In vain did they seek the thieves. I knew perfectly well who the thieves were, and was enormously proud because I was smarter than the police. I never let on, though.

"If I didn't swipe stuff," Anna confided to me, "I'd starve."

Many went hungry in those years. Every day they would knock at the door. You couldn't count how often they knocked.

"We're orphans," murmured three children who came to our house every other day. "Have you a piece of bread?" Many were the children who came begging.

"I am a war widow and my child, here, is hungry," a woman clad in black who came every week would say, smiling at us. She had no child, only a big belly, and she was known as "crazy Flora."

"I am sixty-eight years old, my sons were killed on the battlefield, my ungrateful daughters have left me, and my wife lives in a better world," old Lehmann rattled off daily.

Then there was a man who said nothing. He was the "trembler." His arms trembled, his neck trembled, his head trembled. He was always given something. When he came at dinnertime, Frau Weiss would make him come in and sit down at the kitchen table.

"Here, eat some soup," said the kind-hearted woman, who earned her meagre living as a seamstress.

The "trembler" tried to look at her with gratitude, but his neck would not be still. He had a new fit of trembling and, like hunted mice, his eyes darted from one corner of the room to another.

"Here, take a spoon," said Frau Weiss, heroically fighting back her tears.

The man seized the spoon with both hands and clung fast. When his trembling ceased for a moment, he hastily poured the broth into his mouth, spilling half of it down his chin. Big gluey drops of sweat stood out on his contorted face, and just as he opened his mouth to express his thanks, his neck and head resumed their uncontrollable twitching. He dropped his spoon, and again his looks flew at the walls, to the right, to the left, back and forth.

Finally he brought forth an indistinct babble.

"Don't mention it," said Frau Weiss, swallowing hard. "When you're hungry, come again."

Frau Weiss spoke with a strong Yiddish accent, and often got her words in the wrong order.

But Frau Stiefel, the landlord's wife, was not an immigrant Eastern Jew like my foster-mother; she spoke a pure, faultless German.

When a beggar knocked at her door, she didn't even bother to open it, but called loudly from behind it so that everybody in the house could hear: "Go up to the third floor. There's a Jewish woman up there who never sends anybody away. You'll be sure to get something from her. We're poor ourselves."

I sat on the stairs and heard everything. The midwife on the first floor heard everything, too.

"The old skinflint! The old hyena!" railed the corpulent Frau Schade. "The filthy slut! At noon her hair is still in snarls. Ugh! It's disgusting! Why, she's so stingy she never even washes herself! What's she got against you, anyway?"

"I don't know," answered Frau Weiss. "The rent I'm always paying. What else can a landlord ask for?"

"When I grow up," I promised my foster-mother, "I'll thrash Frau Stiefel until she apologizes!"

"A Jew doesn't pick fights," Frau Weiss cautioned me.

"It's not just that Jews don't fight with women," said Frau Schade, shaking her head with disapproval, "but that one is too filthy for a decent person to touch."

"How many decent people are there in the world?" Frau Weiss asked sceptically.

"I am sure there are a good many," asserted the midwife, and her hands traced a large circle in the air.

"I wish you were right," sighed Frau Weiss.

Next door to old Frau Zipfel lived Frau Lina Hering, *née* Schultheiss, a widow. Everybody in the house knew that "life had given her a dirty deal."

Shortly before the war, her husband, a drunkard, died. She never forgave him for dying just at that time. Had he only waited a little while before dying, had he become a soldier, a dead soldier, she would have received a pension and his death would have been useful at least. But as if to spite her, he "drank himself to death" four weeks before the war began. She was very bitter on this account, and swore that never again would she allow a man to touch her. This vow she had kept until she met Kupke.

Frau Hering worked in the Scheibe and Koch munitions factory, where she was one of the three hundred sixty-seven pale, slaving, miserable women employees. Her neighbour at the lathe was a man, the only one in her section. This man was Herman Kupke, and her acquaintance with him was to prove a fateful one. For his sake she broke her vow. One day, many years later, she was to hang herself because of him.

They were brought together in this way:

"Lina," Kupke told her one day, "I like you. Out of all these cows, you're the only woman that appeals to me."

"Go away," she answered. "You're just like all the other men. You're pigs, all of you. I know what you're after. But I'm no baby. Nobody can fool me. Try somebody else."

"But, Lina," insisted Kupke, handing her a dozen more steel rings to grease, "you're mistaken about me, I'm not like the others. Honest!"

"Tweet, tweet, tweet."

"Honest, I'm not, Lina!"

"Oh, can it!" said Lina, moving away from him. "Take your hand away. Every man says the same thing about himself. My first husband said it, too. I fell for it once. And once is enough."

"And I've been wounded twice! I've been through a great deal, and for the fatherland too!" said Kupke, and his feelings seemed hurt. Again he tried to get around her. "I'm a lucky guy, Lina. I don't have to go back to the front. I'm in the auxiliary service, and I don't have to answer to anybody but the district commander. I have the Iron Cross, second class, and a nice pension. And I like you, Lina!"

He showed her the black ribbon of the cross and his pension card. He pulled up the sleeve of his blue overalls and displayed his injured elbow. Lina examined it carefully. The town was small, the women were bored and lonely, and after all Kupke was a war hero with an income. And what a chest he had, too, covered with hair, as thick as mattress-stuffing! When she saw all that, Lina began to feel a little differently.

"Now you know me," said Kupke. "We're both turning hand grenades. I'm unmarried, too. And what about you? Are you going to mourn your husband the rest of your life? You're young yet, kid. I've got honest intentions, Lina, as true as my name is Herman Kupke!"

"Ah," said Frau Hering, "I've heard all that before, too."

"But I really mean it," Kupke assured her.

"And how many times have you said that before to other girls?" Frau Hering asked, briskly knocking down the lid of a case full of rings. "I'll bet I'm not the first one you've made promises to!"

Nevertheless, when "just passing by" he quite unexpectedly knocked at her door for the first time, she let him in. Her apartment was neat, the furniture was pretty and still almost new, the curtains at her windows had just been changed, and while her rooms were tiny and the walls slanted to the ceiling the place was really cosy. Lina was proud that he liked her little home. She didn't notice that after one brief hour he was behaving as if the whole place belonged to him. She was busy here and there, her cheeks flushed. She hadn't smoked a cigarette for a long time—and again there was a man in her home.

"I don't feel at all like going home," Kupke said after they had talked about the factory for a while. "To think that I only meant to say good-evening to you. And tomorrow is Sunday."

"How do you spend your Sundays?" Lina inquired, with eagerness.

"I always spend them alone," Kupke answered somewhat wistfully. "You know, I don't seem to fit in with the others. . . . You are really the first one. . . . You make me think I'd like to take a walk with somebody in the country . . . with the sun shining . . . and the wind blowing just right. . . . And then you come to a little inn with a duck pond . . . and there's a lazy dog that lies in front of the door and you have to step over him. . . . And the two of us could have a glass of beer. . . . It would be nice, wouldn't it? A glass of beer . . . As a matter of fact, did I ever tell you that before the war I used to drive a beer truck?"

"No," said Frau Hering, awakening abruptly from her beautiful dream. "If you're a drinking man, there's no use our talking any more. All my misfortune came because my first husband was a drunkard." She wiped away a tear, which was instantly followed by many more. "You must forgive me," she sobbed. "But when I think of what that drunkard made me suffer! . . ."

"Poor Lina!" said Kupke, taking her hands and stroking them tenderly. "I could kill him if he were still alive."

"You can't imagine what I suffered, Herman," she sobbed, looking at him gratefully through her tears. "I never told a living soul what my life was like with that man. I couldn't sleep, I stayed awake half the night waiting for him. As soon as he came into the court I knew from the sound of his step that he was drunk. And then he'd stumble around looking for the house door and the neighbours would wake up and stick their heads out of the window and curse at him. I was so ashamed! And then he'd stagger up the stairs. And he'd bump into the chairs in the kitchen looking for the light switch. . . . No, I don't want to go through that again. Never. . . ."

Kupke shook his head. "And you stood for all that?"

"What else can a weak woman like me do? A few times I went to get him at Müller's saloon. . . ."

"Yes, you certainly had a hard time," Kupke agreed. He stood up. "And now I must go, it's getting late."

"Please stay," she begged him. She was afraid. "Don't leave me alone tonight. Now that we've talked about everything. . . ."

"You see?" said Kupke without surprise. And he gave her a kiss, the first one. Then he hung his coat over the chair and lowered the wick of the kerosene lamp.

"Here are his slippers," Frau Hering whispered. "I couldn't throw them away; they were hardly worn. Do they fit you, Herman?"

"They were made to fit me," Kupke declared, laying his suspenders on the table.

Lina opened a door.

"Here," she said, and again began to cry. "Forgive me," she said, "but this time it's because I'm so happy."

For a long time Kupke lay awake, staring at the ceiling and at the slanting wall under which the bed stood. The woman beside

him was asleep. Softly he got up and slipped to the window. It was tiny, like an attic window, but just the same he thought it was nice here. Outside he could see the dark outline of the front house. Below was the yard, and above, a few remote stars. The air did him good. He cautiously went back to bed, and after a while he fell asleep. But it was an uneasy sleep. He dreamed. . . .

It was a hot day in July. Sunday. He was going to the country with Fräulein Hilde Siebert, the streetcar conductress. They crossed pretty meadows and fields and entered the pine woods.

Hilde, a thin, anæmic little person, light as a feather, floated in the air beside him. She was wearing her black uniform with its tight trousers, and over her plaited hair was a man's cap, tilted to one side. She had wings, and flew rather than walked.

"I've got to work today. I'm on night duty. From six to nine, my rascal," she sang.

"Poor Hilde," said the hypocrite rascal.

They held hands, they looked for a secluded path. The sun was blazing hot.

"I'm tired, I can't fly any more," the girl said, unbuttoning her heavy coat.

They came to a pretty meadow strewn with flowers.

"Come down now, put your wings away," Kupke entreated. "We have so little time left."

They sat down side by side.

They lay down.

Afterwards, Kupke said to the girl with the glistening eyes:

"You must put your wings on again, now. After the wedding we'll be together always. I'll soon have my pension, and then you won't have to work any more. . . ."

"Rascal!" cried Hilde, floating lightly off the ground.

"Hilde! Hilde!" cried the rascal, trying to soar after her.

But instead he fell into a hole, a deep black hole. . . .

Someone was shaking him back to consciousness. It was Lina.

"Who is this Hilde?" she asked, in tears. "For the last five minutes you've been calling Hilde."

Kupke was dismayed. "Hilde . . . ? Ah, yes, Hilde! Hilde was my sister. But she is dead. You know, I have no family left. I'm all alone in the world." To himself he said furiously: What an idiot I am! I must keep my trap shut in my sleep! . . .

"No family!" said Lina, full of pity and with sleepy tenderness. "But from now on you're no longer alone, my little squirrel, my own."

"My . . . my Lina," said Kupke, and he hugged her tight. "I'll find a pretty name for you, too. But let's get married first."

Kupke wasn't the only man who tossed in his bed that night. There was Berta Schaller's husband. He had only twelve hours left, then he had to go, for his leave would be over.

"Don't lie awake like that, Franz. Try to sleep for a couple of hours," his wife begged him.

"What about you?" asked Franz. "Why don't you sleep?"

"I can't because somebody next door at Frau Hering's keeps walking up and down," she explained. "It's the first time she's had a visitor since her husband died."

"And if I don't come back," growled Franz, "somebody'll be walking up and down in your house too. That's the way it goes. No use telling me different either. I'm no fool."

"How can you think such things?" Berta protested.

"What else can you women do when we're not here any more?" Franz persisted. "All right, let's not talk about it. Your denying it now won't change things later on, believe me."

Berta thought to herself: It's really best if I don't contradict him, he's so different now from what he used to be. Nowadays he gets excited over nothing. . . .

"I want to tell you something," she said. "After Handtke, the baker, was killed, the members of his rifle-club came to see his wife. I happened to be in the shop at the time, and you should have

seen it. They brought her a bouquet, and one of them, an important man in the club, told her solemnly: 'Frau Handtke, your husband, our fellow-member, died like a German hero, and we shall honour his memory for ever; may that be a comfort to you.' And do you know what fat Mrs. Handtke said then? She said: 'It's very nice of you to come and see me, his widow, and if all of you were to become my customers to help a bereaved woman, that would be so nice that I can't even tell you how nice it would be. But as far as my husband is concerned, he would have done just as well to die at home, because I have no idea how to run things here and my apprentice Ewald is causing me nothing but trouble.' That's what she said."

"What does she mean by 'trouble'?" asked Franz, who couldn't help laughing.

"It's crazy, the things women are doing around here!" Berta said indignantly. "And the married ones are the worst of the lot. You remember Louise Liebig? You know, her husband was a policeman before the war, and now he's in the infantry just like you. Well, all day long she sits by the window and cries: 'Ewald, darling, my dear little Ewald. . . .' That boy isn't sixteen yet, and she's thirty-five at least. Oh, it's true that Ewald is a sturdy boy, quite good-looking, a real sturdy fellow for his age. You know, tall and blond, and last week I noticed he was getting really broad-shouldered like a man, really a young man. . . ."

"Is that so?" said Franz dryly.

"Yes, not bad at all," Berta said eagerly. "But after all, he's still just a child. Why, his voice is just breaking. Well, every time that shameless Liebig woman calls across the street: 'E-e-ewald, darling!' the rascal leaves the bakery and runs over to see her. You know, Franz, that's going too far, don't you think?"

"Sure," said Franz.

"So, that happened once too often for Frau Handtke. One day the boy had been away more than a quarter of an hour, leaving the loaves in the oven with nobody to watch them, so she made a bee-

line for Frau Liebig's. The door was unlocked, and she walked right in, and what do you think she saw? There was Ewald sitting on that woman's lap—and her husband is in the infantry just like you. You can imagine what Frau Handtke said!"

"No," said Franz, "I can't."

"'Get back to the bakery!' she said. And she gave the young cub a couple of good slaps in the face."

"And what did Frau Liebig do?" asked Franz.

"She said: 'You ought to be ashamed of yourself, beating a child like that.'"

Franz suddenly pushed back the blanket, got up, and went over to the window.

Berta watched him without speaking.

For a long while he stared out into the darkness. Then he came back and sat on the edge of the bed. "I'll sit next to you," he said, and he took her hands. They were trembling.

"You're crazy, all of you here," he said. "I don't know where I am any more. How old am I? Twenty-five? Am I? Once I was a carpenter. Then I went to war. I was wounded and sent home, and tomorrow I've got to go back to the front. And what happens to you in the meantime? You've all gone crazy! You run after babies and old men instead of making them stop the war. . . . No, let me speak my mind; you're one of them, Berta. You're not very different, you don't have to tell me anything. I'm not angry with you, why should I be? You don't worry about anything else here. And you remember us only because you miss us. Isn't that so? What do you know about things out there? What hell we're going through! When we conquer a church after an attack, and read on the wall outside: '*A bas les Boches*,' or something like it, I can't help thinking that the words were written by a French worker who may have been a carpenter just like me and who knows as little as I do why he's fighting. Then the French counter-attack. And we leave the church and ten minutes later the French are in the village and in the church. Then we have to storm them again; we

want to get back that same ruined church. And when we finally get it back, your neighbour grins at you and says: 'I was lucky, I wasn't hit this time.' And his right eye is hanging down a foot on a string of muscle and he hasn't even noticed it yet. . . . Then you sit for forty-eight hours, waiting for relief, and the thunder doesn't stop and you think: When will they put an end to this shit, it's high time they revolted at home, all this slaughter for an old church doesn't make any sense, the Frenchies, too, they want to be left alone. . . . And then you get a lucky shot and you go home for a few days, just like me. And when you get home what do you find? You find you've been betrayed and sold out. And the women have got somebody else. They've got substitutes—bakers' apprentices and old men from the rifle-club. We're just fools to think anyone still wants us. . . ."

Berta said softly: "Stop it. You hurt me when you talk like that."

"Maybe leave is the lousiest part of the war," murmured Franz, pressing her hands so tight she had to bite her lips to keep from crying out. "Once I asked in a postcard if the woods where I played as a child were still there, if the trees still grew and you still had birds and flowers. But you didn't understand. Well, now I've seen for myself. Everything's still there, all nature is just as it used to be. And the city hall is still there. And the three churches. And at the party headquarters they've still got Bebel's picture up. Only the picture of the last May Day parade in 1914—they've put that away in a closet. They want to save it. Save it! For us? Don't make me laugh."

Berta freed her hands. "In the factory the women are so weak about ten of them faint every day. The women are keen on everything that looks like a man, it's true. But that's all just like a disease. And the hunger is stronger, much stronger than anything else. Do you know what we'd all like to have best? Some real butter and a piece of good sausage. . . ."

"We've known for a long time out there, too, what hunger is,"

said Franz. "It's got so that we're even glad when the rations are good, though good rations mean an attack. We've stopped wanting it to be quiet, because then there's no grub. And you should see us get going when we know it's against the British! We can hardly wait to get into their trenches. You can't imagine how much grub they have, those British; we're like beggars next to them. They've got bread, I'm telling you, real bread!"

"Good bread?"

"White bread!"

"And meat too?"

"Whole stacks of cans!" Franz assured her.

"Once," Berta said softly, "they searched everybody in the factory. Anti-war pamphlets had been distributed, but nobody knew by whom. And they never found out."

"That happened only once?"

"It's a long time since I heard anything," admitted Berta. "And how about at the front?"

"Nobody trusts anybody else," Franz conceded honestly.

"And you expect us women to have more courage?" asked Berta. Franz stood up and began to dress silently.

"Where are you going?" asked Berta with alarm. "It's so early."

"I want to go to the woods again."

"Wait!" said Berta, getting up.

"Are you coming with me?"

"Do you think I'm going to leave you now?"

"No, don't leave me," said Franz. "Say you won't leave me! Give me your word of honour!"

"Franz!"

"My nerves are so shaky," he said, ashamed.

"We're both like that. It's the war. It's nothing to be ashamed of." And she tried to force a brave smile.

Foraging

ONE day the midwife came upstairs and said: "I have a favour to ask of you, Frau Weiss."

At once Frau Weiss grew terribly agitated. She cast a worried glance at her pots. "You're not going to borrow a pot from me! Don't you know I'm kosher?"

The corpulent midwife laughed so hard that tears ran down her cheeks. "Now tell me, honestly, if you'd really refuse me a pot if I asked for one?"

"How can I lend you a pot, when you're going to cook pork in it?" murmured Frau Weiss.

"You mustn't worry about that," the midwife reassured her. "I forgot the taste of pork long ago. All I get to eat is boiled turnips."

Frau Weiss shifted uncomfortably. "Even if it's not for pork . . . even if you were just to take your spoon and stir my kosher pot with it, and if it happened that even before the war you had eaten pork soup with that same spoon . . ."

"Since the war began, I have cleaned my spoons once or twice," cried the midwife. "Do you think I've left my spoons unwashed for two years?"

"God forbid!" cried Frau Weiss. "You know that I like you! But just the same I can't give you my pots. That's forbidden."

"Who forbade it?" inquired the midwife, pretending to be insulted.

"God," said Frau Weiss, blushing.

"Then there's nothing to be done about it," the midwife earnestly agreed. Then she burst out: "But I had no idea of asking for a pot! I just want you to let Jacob go foraging with me!"

"You are so kind," breathed Frau Weiss with relief, looking with joy at her rescued pots. "When do you want to go?"

"Right away. And as usual, the sausage and bacon will be for me. If I get eggs and butter, it'll be divided equally."

I was delighted. I dropped everything and rushed downstairs. This wasn't the first time that I had gone foraging with Frau Schade. She was so corpulent that no peasant woman ever believed her tales of hunger and misery, no matter how much she talked, but she wouldn't let anybody get the better of her. One day she had had the idea of setting out accompanied by a child. As she herself was childless, she looked around the house. I had no mother, so maybe that's why she chose me.

We soon learned our roles. The midwife was blessed with a ready wit. She played the desperate mother masterfully, and I was her half-starved son. Our success was almost miraculous. My wretched appearance softened many a hard heart. Many a peasant woman was moved to generosity. The midwife taught me a few phrases, and each time she gave me a cue I knew what I was expected to say. She herself improvised. When we returned to Castle Street in the evening, her black midwife's kit was always full.

We would begin by taking the streetcar so as to get out of the city as fast as possible.

"Hello, little Hilde Siebert," the midwife said solicitously to the sad-faced conductress, who was noticeably pregnant. "A few more weeks and everything will be all right."

"You have no idea what's been happening in the meantime."

"Is he going to marry you?" asked the midwife, paying for her ticket.

"Don't be silly! Kupke has found somebody else now, a widow!" exclaimed the conductress bitterly, taking the money. "Thank you. Is that your boy?"

"I'm her son," I said sadly. "We're hungry!"

"Oh, rubbish!" said the midwife, giving me a push. "Not until the village."

At the terminal we got off and crossed the bridge. A tall woman pushing a baby carriage came toward us, her satin petticoat rustling as she walked. Under the bridge the water roared by.

"Greet the lady," whispered the midwife.

The lady wore gloves reaching to her elbows, and a whole flower-bed adorned her wide-brimmed hat.

"How's Fritz doing?" the midwife inquired, peeking behind the curtain of the baby carriage.

"He's not gaining a bit of weight," the lady said helplessly. "What shall I do?"

"Go to the doctor. He'll prescribe more milk for the baby. And how is Claus?"

"He misses his father," the lady lamented, nervously twitching at her lace collar. "All his education is wasted. When I tell him something, he makes fun of me. He's too much for me. Besides, I have no time."

"Are you as busy as all that?"

"The Patriotic Women's Association takes up all my time," said the lady. "Every afternoon we knit for the men in grey. By the by, have you heard that the price of potatoes is unbelievably high in France? They had a lecture about it at our Association. Now it's quite certain that the French will lose the war. They haven't even potatoes! And everything is so expensive there!"

"Here too," said the midwife. "We've got to go now."

"Is that your boy?"

"Why, doesn't he look like me?" inquired the midwife eagerly.

"Indeed he does! Your spit and image!"

"That's good. Don't forget the doctor. Little Fritz must get a double milk ration. And now, adieu!"

"But, Frau Schade! That's French!"

"That's right! I'm a plain woman of the people. How can I know which language is which! Good-bye, then!"

"*Gott strafe England!*" said the lady, with a friendly smile.

"Silly goose," growled Frau Schade when we were finally out of earshot.

No bigger than Tom Thumb, I walk with the midwife along the road leading to Z—. Frau Schade sings: "Dolly, you're the

star of my eyes. Dolly, I love you so!" Then she sings: "In Schöneberg, in the month of May, there was a girl . . . !" I sing with her. Her black kit-bag swings between us. We are both gay. The road is beautiful. The sun is not too hot today. We are alone in the countryside.

"What kind of trees have we here?" inquires the midwife, breathing heavily as she marches.

"Poplars, teacher," I answer as in school, and we both laugh ourselves hoarse.

"What do you know about these poplars?" Without stopping, the midwife points sternly at the tall trees.

"They were planted by Napoleon!"

"Who says so?"

"Fräulein Schulze, the local history teacher."

"So Napoleon was court gardener to our princes?" Frau Schade tries to trap me. She leans over to pull up her stockings, which keep slipping down as she walks.

"He was a Frenchman," I say, and look up to watch the beginnings of her frown. "Like all Frenchmen, he wanted to conquer the world. But he did not succeed, because, as Miss Schulze says, God was with the Germans then, just as he is today."

"I understand. And what do you learn in local history?"

"Herman, bailiff and patron of our town, died in the year 1249, and Jutta, his spouse, followed him to the other world in the year 1268!"

"Sit down, Fishman, you get an A!" says the midwife. She stops, for her stockings are again slipping down. Then we gaily continue our walk and again sing the song about Dolly.

Now the village of Z—— is in sight. We stop singing at once, and assume the expression of beggars. At our left are the first small farms. Then comes a larger farm surrounded by a mossy wall. We quickly enter the half-open gate and walk across the wide empty yard to the farmhouse. Opening a door, we find ourselves

in a big kitchen. Several women are sitting around a table, eating. They don't even look up.

Frau Schade sniffs and whispers to me: "Bacon and potatoes!" Then she says aloud: "Which of you is the lady of the house? I have only one question to ask."

The women continue to eat without looking up. They do not answer. One of them, a servant girl, laughs. Frau Schade's face reddens, and I am furious too, but still we stand there.

"If you don't want to tell me which of you is the lady of the house," persists Frau Schade, "and if she doesn't speak out herself, I must tell you all that we do not want charity. We pay whatever you ask. There is nothing to eat in town."

"We have nothing ourselves," says a robust woman, continuing to mash her potatoes without looking up.

"It hurts my stomach to see somebody eat," Frau Schade now bursts out. She nudges me and that is my cue.

"Mamma!" I begin to weep. My first line!

No response. The spoons scrape in the bowls. One of the women giggles again.

"How can you be so callous?" Frau Schade cries indignantly. "Just look at my hungry child! Just see how he cries!"

Reluctantly, the farmer's wife and the servants look up. They are visibly taken aback at the sight of me. I howl hideously, with all my might. I seem paler and smaller than I really am. Frau Schade always used to say that I played my role most convincingly. She didn't realize how seriously I took it all—I found it so unfair that the people in the village should have so much and we in the city so little.

"Are you hungry?" the farm woman asks.

"Ha!" Frau Schade exclaims bitterly. So very bitterly that it gives me the creeps, even though I know very well that her "Ha!" is for my benefit.

"I'm always hungry!" I sob. "Isn't that so, Mother?" I ask pite-

ously, in a soft, affecting tone. This oft-tried exclamation will certainly produce its effect. Frau Schade calls it "an arrow that goes straight to its mark."

"What if you're caught?" the woman inquires, undecided. "Foraging is prohibited."

"Then I'll give a false name," Frau Schade says innocently.

"We deliver everything to the city, to the food office. We are under government regulation." The farmer's wife is clearly hesitating. Probably I shall be called on for another line. Right: Frau Schade nudges me again.

"Mamma! I'm always hungry," I whine again. Everything depends on the whining; Frau Schade made that clear to me when we first began our expeditions.

"Marta," grumbles the woman, and the servant who giggled gets up clumsily. "Marta, bring an egg."

I know exactly what I have to say now.

"My four brothers and sisters will be very glad to have one egg," I say gratefully, very gratefully. Frau Schade glances at me with approval.

"Make it two eggs," the farmer's wife orders reluctantly, and with a sullen face she pockets the money Frau Schade hands her. . . .

We visit six other farms.

"Just look at my child," cries the midwife when all the lines—the lines prepared in advance—do not help. "And then throw us out if you have the heart to!"

Three farm women do have the heart to. Three times we are thrown out, but we have better luck with the rest.

"Goodness! So-o-o-o pale!" says one soft-hearted woman, and cuts a slice of sausage for me to eat.

"He'll eat it at home," Frau Schade quickly intervenes. Outside she explains: "I'm not going to give you anything that isn't kosher, you know."

And she puts the slice of sausage into her own mouth.

On the way home she insists on carrying the heavy bag. At first everything goes well. But at the railroad crossing, suddenly we see a policeman rising up from nowhere, before us! Our hearts begin to pound. He is coming straight toward us, out of the signal-box!

"So you've been foraging!" he says sternly, pointing at the bag.

"What makes you think that?" the midwife protests indignantly. "I'm a midwife, I've been delivering a baby." She shows her certificate. "I have bandages and a basin in that bag. The kind of thing that's no man's business."

"All right, all right," says the policeman apologetically. "I have to keep my eyes open, you know—the city folk are foraging like mad these days."

The midwife yawns, as though weary after her work. "People like me can't even think of foraging. It was a difficult birth. In the old days they'd at least have given the midwife a cup of real coffee. Now she gets some stuff made out of roasted barley! Phooey!"

"Was it a boy?"

"Triplets!" The midwife beams with satisfaction.

"Triple congratulations, then." The policeman walks away laughing.

The midwife is laughing too, and so am I. It was well done.

"How did you like that?"

"You're much smarter than Fräulein Schulze," I tell her.

"No one knows our countryside better than I," she boasts gaily.

We approach the city unchallenged. The bag is delightfully heavy, and once again we're singing: "In Schöneberg, in the month of May, there was a girl . . ."

Lina's Marriage

THAT was in 1918, the last year of the war. Lina was exceedingly happy, and told everybody so. When she told Kupke, he would nod. "I am happy too."

"As happy as I am?"

"Just as happy as you, Lina."

"When I think that from now on I'll have a husband all for myself, I feel quite different about things," Lina said. "You know, Herman, I believe that I never had any great love for my first husband; besides, he was a drunkard. I'm discovering only now what love really is. And to think that once I didn't even want you. You've changed me entirely. Ah, it's wonderful! With you, everything is wonderful."

Kupke thought to himself: A good girl, Lina. Lucky she doesn't know everything. . . .

Lina didn't know everything. She had never heard of Hilde Siebert, who had once considered Kupke her fiancé and called him sweet names; she had never heard that Kupke had given Hilde the slip. Now Hilde had no fiancé and was desperate. Insulted, disgraced for ever. The aged lawyer whom she consulted did not conceal from her that he really thought it disgraceful to make a virgin pregnant. Damages were the least thing to be demanded from the faithless lover. The document he drew up was inspired by honest indignation against Kupke, who had compromised the girl, thus greatly decreasing her chances of matrimony and inflicting a patent injury upon her. Particularly reprehensible, the complaint stressed, was the fact that the former fiancé, on the strength of his promises, had each week appropriated for his own use a part of the complainant's ration cards.

Two weeks before his marriage, Kupke was ordered to pay a regular sum to Hilde Siebert, his former fiancée, for the support of his son. Not a word of this did he breathe to his future bride. . . .

And so Herman and Lina became husband and wife. Lina was henceforth Frau Lina Kupke.

The couple lived in Lina's apartment in 21 Castle Street. Kupke did the proper thing: he invited the whole house to have a glass of beer on Sunday. Even Frau Dvora Weiss had to come, although she resisted the invitation as long as she could. "You must come," said Lina in offended tones when she came, for the last time, to turn out the light on Friday. Until now she had been Frau Weiss's *Shabbesgoite*. For many years it was her duty to turn out the lights every Friday evening and to make a fire in the slow-burning oven every Sabbath morning. But now, she explained with embarrassment, her husband, the new one, wouldn't stand for it. From now on Anna Gaal would have to be the *Shabbesgoite*, she said. "And, anyway, you must come," Frau Kupke insisted. "You're one of us here, so you must come and help celebrate my wedding."

Before noon on Sunday the inhabitants of the house gathered, with their presents, in Müller's saloon at 19 Castle Street. Frau Ida Gaal came with her daughter, bearing a plate rack. Frau Zipfel and her tomcat Peter also made their appearance, bringing with them three spoons. Frau Louise Liebig came; she brought a plate rack too, but it could be exchanged. Frau Schubert brought a kitchen pot, and the midwife brought six plates. Frau Wunder had excused herself, she did not feel well, so Frau Liebig averred, with appropriate clucks, that she had arrived at the time—but Frau Schubert thought she was not old enough for *that*. "Even older," Frau Liebig retorted spitefully. Stiefel, the landlord, and the two women of his household had not yet put in an appearance, although they had definitely promised to be there. Frau Weiss presented the newlyweds with three towels, which I personally handed to them. The host offered everyone a glass of beer.

Kupke said with a smirk: "Among so many ladies I feel like a prize-winning bull."

No one laughed.

"I will laugh, anyway," he said, and he did laugh. He deliberately looked over all the women present, one after another. Not one of them looked festive. They all had piled their braided hair high on their heads, and the heavy coiffure did little to flatter their worn faces. Only Frau Liebig, who lived in front, wore her hair in a youthful style, drawn flat on each side, and thickly pomaded.

"In spite of the terrible times we're living in, nothing is changed," the stout midwife remarked, taking a long draught. "The beer may be watery, but the young people still fall in love and get married. You wouldn't think it possible! Things don't come as easily to everybody as they do to you, dear Frau Kupke. You're lucky to have your husband. I know a little girl, a streetcar conductress. She had a fiancé once, and now she has his child, but he's gone!"

"To your health!" Kupke said. "Another glass!" he ordered.

"Don't drink too much, Herman," begged Lina.

"When I think, dear Frau Kupke, how your first husband used to torment you . . . and now you have this fine young fellow. . . . Who could ever have foreseen this, Peter?" old Frau Zipfel murmured.

"Just like a fairy-tale," sighed Frau Liebig. "He's young, and he gets a pension, too! When you think how hard everything is nowadays. You're lucky, Frau Kupke!"

"To your health!" said Kupke. "Another glass!"

"Please don't drink so much, Herman," begged Lina.

"It's not so easy to catch a young man these days," young Frau Schubert sighed. "An old one, that's different. The old men chase us like mad nowadays, they think they can have their innings now."

Kupke sat beside his Lina on a leather-covered settee, and looked disdainfully at the husbandless women sitting around the table. Stiefel hadn't shown up yet, though his wife and divorced daughter had meanwhile put in a tardy appearance, congratulated the bride and groom, and accepted a glass of beer.

"To your health!" said Kupke. "Another glass!"

"Please don't drink so much, Herman," Lina implored, almost tearfully.

Frau Stiefel explained where her husband had gone, and said he would positively join them later.

Emanuel Stiefel, the enthusiastic rabbit-breeder, was attending the general meeting of the German Rabbit Society, which before the war had been the Belgian Hare Association. Precisely on the stroke of eight, the chairman of the association, Karl Fichte, retired stationmaster, opened the proceedings in the vast "Reichs Hall" with a cordial welcome to the impressive number of delegates representing the leading clubs of German rabbit-breeders in the city and vicinity. The members of the association, most of them elderly men, then stood up to honour the memory of the younger members who had fallen on the field of battle, and the first part of the meeting ended with three enthusiastic cheers for His Majesty the Kaiser.

Again and again Herr Stiefel glanced at the clock and thought with despair that in Müller's saloon a young couple, tenants in one of his rear apartments, was waiting for him. But he could not leave before the election of the executive committee—that was out of the question. And the election was far from due.

The treasurer of the association, Haase, the retired postmaster, took the floor, and solemnly exhorted his audience to subscribe to the trade journal, *The German Rabbit-Breeder*. Without it, he explained, close co-operation was impossible. Furthermore, the speaker announced, the association stocked for the benefit of its members an excellent feed substitute, and orders would be accepted at the close of the meeting. But in any case, the ex-postmaster stressed, breeding activities must be carried on in such a way as to benefit the sorely tried fatherland.

Thereupon the speaker presented his report of the annual rabbit show. "Fellow-breeders, ladies and gentlemen, in spite of the hardships imposed on us by these sad times, our association, in so far

as the quality of the exhibits is concerned, has again acquitted itself with honour. Above all, I would like to stress the merits of the lady-breeders' section." But it was a disgrace, he added with indignation, that there should still be found German breeders who wilfully raised Japanese or Belgian Giant breeds when both Japan and Belgium had attacked our poor German fatherland. He could not recommend strongly enough—naturally not forgetting the German Ram variety and the German Giant Dapple—the breeding of the Blue and White Viennese, because this species was an excellent breeder, and furthermore, the Viennese were our brothers-in-arms.

Loud applause greeted the speaker, so vigorous despite his advanced age. The applause was louder still when he proposed sending a telegram to Sergeant Siegmund Edelmann, a wounded fellow-member, expressing best wishes for his early recovery.

Then they proceeded to the election.

"Your health!" Kupke proposed gaily. "Another glass!"

"Herman!" implored Lina. "Herman! You've had enough!"

"Let him have some fun," said Frau Liebig, giggling.

"See?" grunted Kupke.

He drank and drank. The women stared and stared. Frau Lina Kupke no longer looked like a happy young bride. Her face was haggard, distressed. Suddenly she threw herself on the midwife's broad bosom and howled like a little child with a stomach-ache.

"You're not acting right," the midwife said to Kupke, reproachfully. "Are you going to get drunk today of all days, after your wife's terrible past experiences?"

For a moment Kupke seemed subdued. Helplessly he looked around, swinging his grey eyes toward the midwife, trying to appear unperturbed. But suddenly he felt boisterous, and craved noise. Fumbling in his pockets, he picked out from among the many papers which he always carried a little booklet, and slapped it down on the table.

"This is my military pass!" he shouted at the silent women. "Nobody but me has a right to say what's proper and what's not! To hell with your goddamned nonsense! I fought for you! For you, get it? I can drink as much as I want! See?"

"Come along," Frau Weiss whispered to me, but she didn't budge from her seat.

Lina was crying. Kupke flipped the pages of his army pass. The women's hostile silence irritated him; he was quite beside himself.

"Here! This is me!" he cried triumphantly. "Here it is in black and white! 'Medal for bravery in August 1916.' And here I am again! 'Iron Cross in November'! And here: 'Positional battles for Verdun, November 1914 to August 1915'! And here: 'Engagement at Ornes-Flabas, December 1914'! And here: 'August to September 1915—action in the Argonne Forest'! And here: 'On April 1, 1916, gravely injured by an artillery shell'! That's all me! And here: 'Behavior as reported by company commander—good'! And here! Religion: 'Protestant'! That's all me, too! Herman Kupke! See? And now I shouldn't take a glass of beer if I feel like it? Fill her up!"

Frau Stiefel and Elli, her daughter, hastily said good-bye. Frau Schubert departed too.

"Don't leave me alone," begged Frau Kupke anxiously.

Kupke looked darkly about him. "Get out of here!" he said menacingly. "Get out, all of you!"

Then he fell silent, apparently realizing that he was drunk. Stretching out his arm, he tried to embrace his wife. "Now why don't you talk? Say something, Lina!" he blustered in pretended innocence. "Why should I always do the talking? Have you lost your tongue, or what?"

"Herman! Herman!" Lina was trembling.

Just then Frau Berta Schaller came into the saloon accompanied by an elderly little man. Approaching the table, they congratulated the newlyweds, and looked with astonishment at the weeping Frau

Kupke. But when the groom got up, grasping a glass in his unsteady hand, and began to speak, they understood what had happened.

"This is Herr Winkler, our foreman from the factory," said Kupke, pointing to Frau Schaller's companion. "God bless our foreman! It's true he's a Red, but what of it? Sit down, Winkler. We're celebrating—hic—my wedding. Frau Schaller can sit down, too, if she promises not to talk against us soldiers—hic! Let's have another drink all around! Lina, maybe I'm drinking a little too much, I admit it. But you won't get sore, will you, Lina? Hic!"

He opened his mouth in a grin and thrust his face at the cringing Lina.

"Tell me the whole truth, do I stink of beer, Lina?" He breathed at her. "Do I smell? Everything that smells good has a smell, you know! Now let's drink a toast. Hic! Let's drink somebody's health! Whose health, foreman? The Kaiser's! I'm black-white-red until I'm dead! As one man! Shoulder to shoulder! Long live our Wilhelm!"

"A little quieter," the saloonkeeper cautioned. "There are others here besides yourself."

"So what! Isn't everything I say true? Confidentially, I can tell you—hic—I'm on everybody's side."

"He doesn't know what he's saying," said Winkler. "Let's take him home."

One Sunday toward the end of October 1918, a tremendous crash is heard in the rear part of the house. Instantly all the windows fly open; women and children lean out so as not to miss a word of the argument. Kupke is yelling so loud that even the deaf Frau Zipfel hears something. "Did someone call, Peter?" she asks her tomcat.

"Where's my hot water? I want to shave!"

"Right away," Frau Kupke says wearily.

"Where's my shaving soap?" yells Kupke.

"Where it always is. In the box under your bed."

"I'll break every bone in your body if you don't obey me!" Kupke rages.

Lina does what she has done for weeks whenever one of these arguments has broken out. She sits down and snivels. Her lower jaw trembles as though she were a toothless old woman. She is unhappy, terribly unhappy. How nice it was before, when she was alone! And now? And now!

"Ah-ooooooooo!"

Kupke is beating her. She howls. She screams.

"Leave me alone!" she screeches.

"Shut up!" he shouts.

She falls against a chair, but it slides. She falls to the floor. Painfully she gets up and puts the chair back where it belongs.

In the rear part of the house the walls are paper-thin. Next door, Frau Berta Schaller knocks on her wall, and cries: "Leave your wife alone!"

Kupke leaps to the window.

"Shut your trap! Mind your own business, you dirty Red!"

Now the window in Schaller's apartment flies open.

"Were you talking to me?"

"Yes, I was talking to you!"

"You ought to be ashamed of yourself, Kupke!"

"Aah, you dirty bitch! You think just because they let your damned Liebknecht out of jail you can shoot your mouth off all over the place! They ought to lock you up too. Jailbird! Red jailbird! Agitator!"

"You shut up, Kupke!"

"You're the one they've been looking for. Yes, you! I know you! Everybody knows you've been agitating against the war!"

"I'd watch what I was saying if I were you."

"You would, would you? You old slut! I'll come over and knock you so flat you'll never get up again!"

"I'm not another Lina!"

"I'll show you who you are!"

"You think that just because my Franz is at the front you can do anything you want to. Well, we'll see about that!"

"You'll see right away!"

"Well, come on over, then!"

"I'm coming over! I'm not scared of any Red bitches! Not me!"

"Come on over, then. My door's open."

"Aah, you're too dirty to touch!"

Behind Kupke, his wife appears holding a jug in her hand. She tries to get him away from the window.

"Your shaving water will get cold again!"

"Leave me alone with your water! Go on! No, give it to me!"

He closes the window with a bang.

Revolution?

NOVEMBER 1918. The school-bell had rung long ago, but still the lesson had not begun. The teachers hadn't even met in their room. In the classroom everything was upside down.

But not only in school were things in a turmoil. In the town, too, a great change had taken place since yesterday. Sentries were posted at the street corners, at the railway station, and near all the bridges.

Pudge announced mysteriously: "I know what's going on! The Kaiser's been shot by Hindenburg!"

"You must be cracked!" we all told him.

"My mother said so!"

"But Hindenburg isn't the enemy!" said the smartest boy in the class, always reasonable.

"I don't care about that!" Pudge insisted, as though he knew much more than he was willing to tell.

Suddenly the door opened and Zunk walked in.

We jumped up as usual, but he motioned us to sit down. "Re-

main seated," he said softly. Ah, how Zunk looked that day! His face was ashen, his necktie all askew.

He sank into a chair and held his head in both his hands. Was he ill? Our Zunk did look peaked! We could see him trying to pull himself together, to stamp his foot, but once again he seemed to collapse. Maybe we should help him, we thought, this loathsome creature? But how could anyone ask Zunk what was wrong with him? No, we couldn't ask him. Nobody could ask. We had no right to speak unless he ordered us to. We dared not even cough.

Five minutes passed, and Zunk didn't yell at us once. It was beyond our understanding. Zunk was no longer Zunk!

Again the door opened, and the arithmetic teacher came in, followed by the school inspector. "Remain seated, remain seated!" they said.

We were all eyes and ears.

"What's the news?" Zunk asked hoarsely.

"Everything is lost!" the arithmetic teacher exclaimed.

"And I had such hopes for the autumn offensive," murmured the inspector sadly.

"It was the weather," Zunk groaned. "The bad weather spoiled everything."

"A week ago I met Pick, the army surgeon, in church," said the inspector to his son-in-law.

Zunk seemed to be deaf.

The inspector was suddenly furious. "That fool Pick! After the sermon he said our situation was serious but not hopeless. Not hopeless! Imagine!"

"But we did everything we could!" moaned the arithmetic teacher. "We subscribed to the war loan and organized sewing clubs. And when I think of the iron Hindenburg on the square! Everybody bought a nail! But what good did it do?"

"And our Kaiser," Zunk faltered. Suddenly he pulled out his handkerchief and burst into tears! "Our poor Kaiser!"

Zunk—crying! Zunk entirely deflated! Were we dreaming?

"My son, be brave!" The inspector tried to comfort him. Suddenly he remembered that we were there.

"Pack your things, children," he sighed. "School is closed. The reopening date will be announced in the newspapers. Now go home and don't stop anywhere. There may be shooting. If there is, run to the nearest house. Now go!"

We slipped out of the classroom on tiptoe. We were sorry for poor Zunk! But it was only fair that he should suffer! Not till we were outside did we sling our school bags over our shoulders.

In the school janitor's apartment a loud argument was in progress.

"I'm going to the meeting!" the janitor was shouting. "I want to go. Do you hear me?"

"No!" his wife shouted in reply. "You won't go! Do you want to lose your job? What if the inspector sees you? What then?"

"This is the revolution. I'm going."

"You aren't!"

"I am!"

"You are not!"

We jumped away from the door in the nick of time. The janitor's wife came out, brandishing a key.

"We'll see who's the stronger!" she exclaimed, and turned the lock twice. "That's all I needed! Going to the revolution!"

As she noticed us, she yelled: "What are you standing here for? Get along home with you! It's the revolution!"

Revolution?

A new word! A word that evoked burning houses and paving stones flying through the air! And blood! It was true that blood was nothing new—for four years we had had the war. But the revolution might be even worse than a four-year war. Fräulein Schulze, our history teacher, had told us stories about chopping off heads.

Quickly! Get home quickly!

We rushed out. At once I was struck by the emptiness of the streets. The store windows were tightly shuttered. Nowhere could we see the revolution, and we were curious to know what it really looked like. And why were there no black, white, and red banners? For four years they had been hanging from every balcony, every projecting story, every attic, day and night, snow, rain, and shine, summer and winter—but why didn't we see any today?

A company of soldiers, behind a band, marched past us toward the barracks. All of them were young recruits. At the head of the parade rode an officer. He too was young. But what was going on? Something frightful was happening! We saw a crowd of women running down the middle of the street after the soldiers. They were all shouting: "The swindle is over! The war is over!"

But nothing *happened*! The soldiers went on marching. The band went on playing. The trumpets blared out "The Three Lilies," without hesitation. For four long years the trumpets had played that song every time the recruits marched from the drill ground to the barracks. Each time there had been new recruits, but the trumpeters had always played the same song of "The Three Lilies" when marching past our school. Now they were playing it again. But this time an old man shouted at them between the first and second verses:

"That's enough of that! What are you going to the barracks for? The Kaiser has run away!"

"Now there's going to be trouble!" Pudge whispered to me.

But nothing happened, nothing at all. Not a thing. The shutters in front of the stores stayed down. The windows remained covered. Nothing, nothing happened. Silent and businesslike, the young soldiers marched past us. Without a gesture, the officer rode at their head.

"Now he's going to pull out his revolver and shoot the old man," Ruzenza whispered to me. In his excitement, he forgot to close his mouth after speaking.

But the officer pulled no revolver! Was the old man right?

Had the Kaiser really fled? From whom? Where to? We were bursting with curiosity. Pudge approached the old man, and took off his school cap.

"I beg your pardon, would you mind telling us," he inquired as though asking where some street was, "whether our Kaiser has really run away from Hindenburg? Did Hindenburg really try to murder our Kaiser?"

"Go home, you ragamuffin! What are you doing here? Get on home!"

We ran away from him. We were about twenty boys between nine and eleven years old. We wanted to see the revolution!

In Hohenzollernstrasse we finally came upon a crowd of people. Surely the revolution must be here! Here, too, all the stores were shut. In front of every shop people were gathered, and more people were constantly joining them. They were coming from everywhere. More and more thickly they crowded in front of the sealed show-cases. From somewhere the strains of an unfamiliar, defiant song came nearer and nearer. Not a single spiked helmet was in sight. The policemen had vanished. No, there was one, over there. It was old Hoffmann! It was hard to move in the crowd. He ordered us not to walk on the left—as though we didn't know enough to keep to the right. Some of us immediately crossed to the right, but the majority paid no attention to the policeman. They even made fun of him! Then he began to yell, and we beat it.

Again and again the school bag was nearly torn from my shoulder by the force of the milling crowd. The defiant song was coming nearer and nearer, until it seemed to be just around the corner. And then a comic parade turned into Hohenzollernstrasse—a parade not of soldiers, not of war prisoners, but of women!

"They're the women that work in the factory with my mother!" Vollmer shouted in amazement. Suddenly he saw his mother in the ranks. "Mother! Mother!" he yelled. "There's no school to-day!"

But Vollmer's mother couldn't hear her son, the song was too loud and punctuated by the women's piercing shrieks. Everywhere there was a din of voices, people calling back and forth, grown-ups shouting at one another before the blank shop windows.

"Mother!" cried Giebler, a long-legged lad, gesticulating toward a new parade that was being greeted with cheers and clapping. One of the women was carrying a flag, the first flag I had seen that day. A red flag. But I had no time to think about that flag, for suddenly I saw Herr Kupke.

Herr Kupke, wildly waving his arms, was standing in front of Frick's pastry shop, surrounded by an agitated group; he was the only man in a throng of women. They were too far away for me to hear what they were saying, but as I pushed my way toward them through the crowd their feverish words gradually became distinct. Kupke and the women were shouting the same words over and over again:

"Usurers! Food hoarders! Slackers! Hang them! Shoot them! Cowards! War profiteers! Now that the game's up the scoundrels flee to Holland! And they leave us here to starve!"

Suddenly stones clattered against the window of Frick's shop. The women shrieked with excitement, stamping furiously on the broken glass. Herr Kupke climbed into the window and, with a loud roar, seized the cardboard stork which for years had held a chocolate bar in its beak. With both hands he tore the stork from its artificial nest and hurled it into the street, straight at the turbulent mob, which burst into hilarious laughter.

Amid a tumultuous clamour, a new column of marching women poured into the street and tried to push forward through the crowd. A man whom I had seen before, I couldn't remember where, ran alongside this new detachment, up to the front ranks. There in the lead was somebody else from our house! Frau Schaller! She shouted at the man who had run up to her, and pointed angrily at Herr Kupke. The man seemed startled, and bellowed

a command to the slowly advancing women, who broke ranks and quickly overflowed the sidewalk until there was hardly enough room left to turn around. The man and Frau Schaller worked their way through the crush of people up to the broken shop window. From inside, Herr Kupke grinned out at them.

"Are you crazy?" Frau Schaller shouted. "We're not thieves and looters!"

"Get the hell out of there!" the man at her side called to the grinning Kupke. Then I remembered him; he was Winkler, the foreman at the munitions factory.

Kupke crossed his arms on his chest and demanded insolently: "Who's giving orders now? This is the revolution!"

"As a member of the soldiers' and workers' council I order you to . . ."

"Not so fast, not so fast!" Kupke interrupted him. "Never lose your head, Winkler! I'm a member of the soldiers' and workers' council too, and you've no damned right to give me orders!"

"Show your papers!" shouted Frau Schaller.

"Here! My shop just elected me!" said Herr Kupke, producing a paper which he held up, out of their reach, for them to read.

Frau Schaller and Herr Winkler stared at the paper. They were flabbergasted.

Frau Schaller was the first to recover from her surprise. "It's insane to elect such people!"

"Such elements were all we needed!" Herr Winkler said helplessly.

"Don't take it too hard," Herr Kupke recommended and, still grinning, he put the paper back in his pocket.

At that moment Frau Schaller noticed me. "Go home at once!" she said angrily.

In the marketplace the scene was about the same. A man was standing on the monument, between the equestrian statues of Herman and Jutta, reading something from a piece of paper. All

necks were craned toward him. After each sentence he was cheered lustily. I managed to get within earshot. The speaker was already hoarse. "The Army High Command has brought a military disaster upon us!" he was shouting. "Seeing that a powerful blow from our superior enemies was impending, seeing that our armies were facing a bloody retreat, they ask for an armistice! Why, comrades? So as to burden us, the starved people, with their defeat!" That was about how it went.

Near the drugstore a non-commissioned officer was pulled out of a streetcar.

"Tear his shoulder straps off!"

"But this is Siegmund Edelman!"

Suddenly Kupke appeared on the scene. He stood in front of the sergeant and spat on his boots. "Here's another one! Nothing but Jews! Of course, they're against the people! I guess you're against socialism, too!"

"Shut up, we're no Jew-baiters!" another man said, and the sergeant was allowed to get back on the streetcar. "We've cut off his shoulder straps, that's all that's necessary!"

Herr Kupke's feelings were hurt. He beat his breast and shouted: "I'm . . . !" He showed his paper.

"So am I!" said the other worker, showing the red band on his sleeve. There was something written on it.

At home, I was received with a flood of reproaches in Yiddish, German, and Polish. On my account, says Frau Weiss, she has been crying for three hours. She had pictured me as a victim of the revolution, lying dead in the gutter. Her heart, she assures me, stopped beating more than once. Her hair has turned grey, she says. (Not today, nor on my account, I tell myself, but I say nothing.) And what will the end of all this be? Now we won't get anything—no food, no kerosene, no coal for the winter, no clothes, no shoes, everything's going from bad to worse! And let no Jew venture to get mixed up in this business! God forbid!

And should I ever again roam the streets on such a day as this, she will take Herman and leave me alone for ever. Her darling Herman, she certainly would take him with her! "Look at Herman! He doesn't worry me like you!"

Of course! Even today Herman has been doing what he always does. For hours he has been squatting silent in a corner, without a glance at what's going on around him, tinkering with an old watch or a gramophone motor, with innumerable wheels, springs, screws, and nuts. No thing is safe from him if it has more than one part. He pulls laces out of shoes, takes pictures out of their frames, unscrews furniture. When nobody is looking, he runs our foster-mother's sewing machine. And he is really happy only when all the component parts of all accessible objects are neatly arranged in front of him, according to their size and shape. After a while he is stricken with panic. Sincerely contrite, he looks at the mess he has made. Timidly and truthfully, he says he didn't mean to do it. Such games as these seem foolish to me at a time when we are all playing "The Torpedoing of an American Steamer" or "German Zeppelin Raids over London." And today more than ever Herman strikes me as stupid. I simply can't understand how anybody can bother about lifeless wheels and screws while the grown-ups are playing revolution!

The next morning we heard shots. But half an hour later everything was quiet again.

After lunch, we played "revolution" in the yard, which we had always been forbidden to enter. That day, however, Herr Stiefel did not rush out and chase us away. Not a single member of the Stiefel family was in evidence. They had locked their door and barred their windows. It was the revolution! The rabbit hutches were empty. Herr Stiefel told the midwife that he'd rather eat himself sick than see his rabbits stolen. And now all Castle Street smelled of roast rabbit. Never before had our street smelled as good as it did that day.

"I won't be at all surprised if Stiefel's windows are smashed," the midwife declared. "When everybody is starving they have no right to slaughter six rabbits and devour them all by themselves, just to keep other people from having any!"

But no windows were smashed, and after a while the odour of the roast subsided.

In the meantime we played "revolution" in the yard.

Hitherto the language used in our games had been laconic and military, but that day it became long-winded and incomprehensible; we declaimed like the popular orators.

I spoke of the Army High Command that had burdened me with a military defeat, and cruel disappointment.

"Bravo!" everyone applauded.

Anna became the Empress Augusta Victoria, and fled, accompanied by Xaver Wunder, to Holland, otherwise the attic.

Karl Handtke, the baker's son, was the all-powerful soldiers' council.

"What have you got in your pocket? A revolver? A machine-gun?"

"It's only a handkerchief."

"What do you need a handkerchief for?"

"I have a cold."

"I have no objection to that. You may fall out."

"Thank you, general of the soldiers' council."

Both of Frau Wolf's sons were playing with us, and Heinz Levy, and friends of Xaver and Anna. And Benno Nadel, the hunchback. We were still at that happy age when children are friendly with everyone who is as old as they are. In order to fight one another, we had to play grown-ups. On that particular day our game was especially complicated, because everybody wanted to be "proletarian" and nobody wanted to be "bourshua." We decided that the revolution would be fought only by proletarians. We didn't suspect how near we came to the truth.

What happened later to the children of 1918?

Heinz Levy was driven to suicide by the Nazis.

Paul Wolf emigrated to America as a doctor.

My brother Herman is an orange picker in a workers' colony in Palestine.

Xaver Wunder is overseer in the same concentration camp where Benno Nadel was brought in alive and taken out dead three weeks later.

And what became of Anna? And of me? . . .

In 1918 I was only eleven years old. . . .

And Herman and I had completely forgotten that we had a father.

But Frau Weiss reminded us of him. "And now," she wept, "now your father will come back."

We could not understand why she was crying.

I was very curious to know.

Book 2

THE INVISIBLE PEACE

Yossel Fishman Becomes Himself Again

MANY were crippled, wounded as only soldiers are wounded, shot in the jaw, the stomach, the chest, or the seat. Many had to learn how to walk laboriously on a new wooden leg. Many a festering stump of flesh hung inside its loose sleeve. But it wasn't a shell splinter, or a bullet, or a bayonet thrust that had brought Yossel Fishman into the hospital where he was now lying in November 1918.

All during 1918 the company in which he served had not been engaged in any military action. A revolution had been raging in Russia, and rumours were current about peace negotiations between Emperor Karl and the new Tsar or whoever was ruling over there. Nobody knew anything definite, not even Captain Roth, who was as tall as a tree and always knew everything. He often said so himself—he was that kind of captain.

Days and weeks passed without a shot being fired. There were no Russians to be seen. Had Fishman's company advanced they would have come upon some Russians sooner or later. But they did not advance. They had received orders to occupy positions in the middle of a large field, and there they entrenched themselves. Behind them lay a forest.

The field was cold and windswept, but the wind was not strong enough to carry off the unhealthful vapours rising from the marsh between the field and the woods. Though there had been no engagement on the plain for some time, the stench of hastily buried bodies remained as strong as in midsummer. But all that made no impression on the soldiers. They were exhausted; exhaustion was their only feeling.

They lay in the holes they had dug for themselves. So long as there was no snow, fieldmice and rats kept them company. Then it snowed, a sharp piercing cold set in, and the field became an insidious shroud. Some time before, these soldiers had marched through a little town. They had seen abandoned houses with enough room for everybody. But it was in that frozen field, and not in the near-by town, that they had to wait for the official end of the war.

The soldiers comforted themselves by saying that perhaps the end was really near. Surely the worst was over, most of them thought. Since they had remained immune to bullets until then, some fancied that they were immune to everything, even death itself, and that no disaster could ever overtake them. They had been through three years of war and were still alive.

Yossel Fishman became a good soldier only after that cruel autumn day in 1915 when his wife died. Only then did he begin to obey orders blindly. He even learned to march! He no longer had blistered feet—from the military point of view his progress was gratifying, a real gain for the army! That he never thought of the enemy or the fatherland while marching was of no interest to the commander-in-chief. Besides, the commander-in-chief didn't even know that one of his soldiers was named Yossel Fishman.

He lost all will power. He obeyed. He shot on weekdays and he shot on the Sabbath. He turned right. He turned left. He threw himself on the ground. He jumped up again. He threw himself down again. He jumped up again. He threw himself down again. Jumped up again. The war machine gave orders, he obeyed. The war now had ordered him to stay in a hole here, at the end of the world, and to await further orders. Dully he obeyed. Without feelings. He waited. A wretch in uniform. . . .

At the end of February, he was stricken with pneumonia. Nothing warlike about it, no hero's wound. And now nobody gave him any orders! After he fell sick, they left him alone. Suddenly he had the right to think as he pleased. But he had forgotten how to

think. A high fever shook him. He shivered. And he trembled because nobody was giving him any orders. He was unaccustomed to being left alone. He thought his end was near. But he was saved. . . .

When the war and the Habsburg monarchy both came to an end, Yossel Fishman was lying in a hospital near Vienna.

Overnight the nervous doctors, the overworked nurses, the impatient sick and wounded, who had hitherto been subjects of the Emperor, became Czechs, Dalmatians, Poles, Bosnians, Hungarians, Croats, Slovaks, Italians, Slovenes, Germans, and so forth. Nobody discussed the Habsburgs any more, but only Czech dumplings, Hungarian goulash, Cracow sausages, Slavonic dances, and, with particular relish, Polish oppression. A few wags suddenly rediscovered their so-called sense of humour that they had lost for more than four years. But Yossel Fishman had never been a wit; he was a simple man and ill at ease in all this turmoil. He had had great respect for the old Emperor Franz Josef, and sometimes wondered whether the *poor* Habsburgs would have come to such a bad end were Franz Josef still alive. Some patients in his ward tried to explain the new era to him. In the next bed lay a Viennese from Leopoldstadt whose name was Joseph Karpeles. At first Karpeles was so depressed by the news, which had found its way even to the hospital, that for days he exchanged not a word with anybody. Only after having learned from a letter that Vienna, the Prater, and the North Station were definitely to remain Austrian, and that consequently he too was to remain Austrian, did his mood completely change. Now it was impossible to keep him silent.

To Yossel Fishman, who timidly asked: "And me? What am I now, my friend?" he answered, clearly surprised at the question:

"Why, what you have always been. A Galician Jew."

When Fishman was discharged from the hospital, he was handed his military papers. They said that he had begun the war as an Austrian, from the province of Galicia, and finished it as a Gali-

cian, nationality temporarily unknown. He attached no significance to these words, some of which were new to him. He also learned from his papers that he had been trained to use a Mannlicher rifle. The columns headed "Orders and Honorary Distinctions" and "Noteworthy Exploits" were left blank. A separate page listed all the engagements, marches, and retreats in which he had taken part, in Volhynia, in the Carpathians, and in Bukovina.

These military papers were the sole reward of the Eastern Jew Yossel Fishman for his part in the war.

Then he went to Germany, the land of promise for many Eastern Jews. That this Germany—having just lost a four-year war—was probably different from the Germany he had imagined in 1914 was a thought that never occurred to him. He would have been surprised in those days had anyone asked him his ideas concerning the destiny of nations. Probably he did not know that nations could have a destiny. From his earliest years his thought had never gone beyond the destiny of one nation only—the Jewish nation. But now he did not think about the Jewish nation, either. He thought only about himself, Yossel Fishman, and his children. He was coming home from the war, and had no wife waiting for him.

As soon as he got into the train that would take him to Germany, he began to think about his new life. He made a strong effort to imagine what his sons would look like now. He tried to hold back his tears and to think only of the "future." That, he believed, was less upsetting.

His greatest desire was to build a "future" for his children and himself. The Eastern Jews living a hopeless life in their countries that were not their countries had long practice in dreaming about the "future." And unfailingly they sought it west of the Vistula and the Carpathians, in a foreign country, preferably Germany. German industrial articles, German books and newspapers, had always been known in the East. And everything German was al-

ways of the finest. Seen from Strody, this remote country had assumed the alluring proportions of a civilized earthly paradise. To be sure, everybody knew that in Germany you had to try hard to become German, that you could not go on being a Galician. Yossel Fishman had now decided to make a compromise with the Germany that was before him: he would become a German, but remain a good Jew, nevertheless. He wanted to be a "German Jew" according to his ideas of what a German Jew should be.

Much later he was to register the failure of his plan. He came to Germany a mature man, worn down by life. The struggle for a new tongue, new ears, new eyes, new tastes—this exhausting struggle of the immigrant proved too much for him. He had fancied that once a real felt hat replaced his velour, everybody would take him for German. But he wore his felt hat unlike any German. Only the topmost button of his coat was buttoned; he never thought of the three lower buttons and buttonholes. For that reason, every German coat he wore soon looked like a Galician caftan. The most painful step was cutting off his beard; to him it was almost fantastic. Yet he did it to show his good will toward the Germans. But later, in shame and anger, he let it grow again, when he became conscious of a certain German growth: anti-Semitism.

Once demobilized, Fishman made definite plans for his arrival in Germany and for the first days of his new life. But when he reached our town and found his two children thinner and taller than he had anticipated; when he addressed them in Yiddish and they answered in German; when he sat and talked with energetic Frau Weiss, whose ideas as to what he should do were as definite as his own; when other Eastern Jews of Castle Street talked to him as people always talk to an impractical helpless widower with two children, he forgot his own plans and listened patiently to everything that was said.

Frau Weiss had rented an apartment for him in advance, naturally at 21 Castle Street, on the fourth floor, right across from Frau Wunder, the war widow.

Although at that time all the residents of the house were largely preoccupied with their own interests, Herr Yossel Fishman's arrival attracted a good deal of attention. Of course, Frau Wunder knew more about him than anybody else did; at least that was what she told everybody who asked her about him. At first—because she was unconsciously afraid of him—she made fun of the solemn-faced, bearded little Herr Fishman who greeted her on the stairs with a guttural *gitten Tog*. This silent man seemed to her almost ridiculous (she laughed, but in reality she was frightened, yes, frightened), this near-sighted, cautious man who had so suddenly appeared on her floor. But little by little the Yiddish *gitten Tog* gave place to the German *guten Tag*. Then she discovered that the little man was "not so bad after all"; and it was only then that she realized she had actually been afraid of this stranger, whom for some time she had even thought sinister, who didn't understand her and whom she did not understand, who used few words but many exaggerated gestures, who nodded his head, bowed with the whole upper part of his body, and waved his hands in his excessive friendliness. Who knows what a foreigner like this has up his sleeve, who knows? Foreigners are robbers, murderers; they come to this country to attack poor unprotected women. After all, Frau Wunder would say to herself, I am a poor unprotected woman, and you can't be too careful about foreigners. Her roomer, Herr Heider, told her the same thing. Everybody in the house, in the town, in Germany, everybody in the world would have said the same thing—and in this case the stranger was Yossel Fishman of Strody on the Stryj. But once he had begun to say "good day" correctly, he ceased to be the foreigner-who-might-attack-a-poor-unprotected-woman. On the contrary, she was now sorry for the man, in spite of his pointed beard, wobbly spectacles, and funny gestures. "It isn't easy for a man with two boys," she

said sympathetically. "It's hard enough for me, with my Xaver and no husband, but a man like that is even worse off, with no woman around, even if he is Jewish."

But it was hard for her and the other residents of the house to get used to the idea that this coughing, rather stoop-shouldered Jew was the father of the Fishman children.

"So you've got a Jewish father!" Anna Gaal said disparagingly.

"How do you know?" said Herman, offended.

"Because my mother says so!" said Anna.

Yossel Fishman was about to make an important call.

"And don't forget," Dvora Weiss insisted, "always call him Herr Doktor Rabbiner."

On his way to the rabbi's home, Yossel Fishman repeated this title to himself over and over again. He entered a beautiful house. The "Herr Doktor Rabbiner" lived on the second floor. Before ringing the bell, Yossel Fishman repeated the title once again, just to be sure of it.

When the door opened—a narrow crack—he inquired: "May I please speak to Herr Doktor Rabbiner?"

A woman's impatient voice said: "Herr Doktor can't be disturbed. Go to the synagogue at six o'clock." And noiselessly the door closed.

At six o'clock sharp Yossel Fishman was in the synagogue. Seen from the outside, it was a beautiful temple, almost a palace. He couldn't believe his eyes when he saw that only eleven persons were inside.

After the last prayer he approached the prayer-leader and said: "Excuse me, please, may I speak to Herr Doktor Rabbiner? My name is Fishman."

"Where are you from?"

"From Strody on the Stryj. Before the war it was a small village in Galicia. Now it's in ruins."

"Herr Rabbiner isn't here today," said the prayer-leader, slip-

ping out of his *tallith*. "Do you want a ticket? I can give you one myself. Where do you want to go? To Leipzig?"

"I don't want to go to Leipzig. What would I do in Leipzig? I want . . ."

"I suppose you want to go to Berlin! We don't give tickets to Berlin! Do you think we're a travel agency? Do you think we shake money out of our sleeves?" He carefully folded his *tallith*. "If you don't want the ticket to Leipzig, you don't have to take it. You can walk!"

At this he turned away, put on his overcoat, and started toward the door.

"I am Herr Fishman," Yossel stammered in his agitation. "You seem to think I want to go away. Why should I go away? I have travelled enough in my life. My name is Fishman!"

"What of it?" said the prayer-leader, turning up his collar. "Lots of people have that name. I haven't got much time. So, do you want to go to Leipzig or don't you?"

"You misunderstand me because of my poor German," sighed Yossel Fishman.

"I understand you quite well. Think it over. Come again tomorrow. Here is a mark for the time being."

"What are you giving me money for? I don't want any money. Did I come to *schnorr*? I am not a *schnorrer*!"

"Oh!" said the prayer-leader in astonishment. "Oh!"

And he put his coat collar down again.

The very next day Yossel Fishman was received by the rabbi. He struggled laboriously over the long title and did his best to speak good German. But once he had expressed his thanks for the care given to his children, he relapsed into Yiddish, with an abundant sprinkling of Hebrew proverbs. He literally overwhelmed the rabbi with Bible passages which he knew by heart.

The rabbi was visibly surprised to hear that Fishman wanted to remain in Germany. He conceded that the children were now at home in Germany, and that the German language had become

their own. But even so, why didn't Fishman want to return to Galicia? After all, the war was over, the children would soon adjust themselves to life in Galicia and easily relearn Yiddish and Polish. So why not go back?

In his embarrassment, Yossel Fishman tried to explain that there were countries from which a Jew would gladly emigrate, but to which he was not likely to return of his own free will.

The rabbi shrugged his shoulders as if unable to understand. But to Yossel Fishman it was most important that the rabbi should understand, so he unburdened his heart.

"If you weren't a Jew I would have to explain and explain again and again that a Jew can't live in that country. Tell it to a *goy* twenty times and he won't understand. For instance, a German or an Englishman or an American wouldn't even maybe know where Galicia is, and why so many nationalities live there and why they're always fighting because nobody can make a living there, and why they all persecute the Jew, because, *nebbich*, he is the weakest of them all. How can you expect a stranger who doesn't know Galicia to understand all that? Even for me it's hard. Galicia used to be black and yellow. Now it's supposed to be red and white. And the Bolsheviks are ready to go in and make the whole place Russian—I don't know what the colour of the new Russian flag is. Explain it ten times, a hundred times, everybody will listen politely, but nobody will understand."

The rabbi toyed nervously with his glasses.

"A *goy* doesn't know anything about us Jews, Herr Doktor Rabbiner. Am I wrong? Did a *goy* ever have to run for his life just because he was a *goy*?"

"Don't say '*goy*.' I don't care for that word. Say '*Gentile*.'"

"A thousand pardons," Yossel Fishman hastily apologized. "I don't mean to offend you and I don't want to take up your time with my foolish talk. But Galicia is in my blood. I lived there for long, long years. I have memories that I cannot forget. I have experienced personally what it means to be a Galician Jew. I have

suffered. How can I forget and go back? I have sworn, just as the Spanish Jews once swore, never to return. . . ."

"But, my dear man, it isn't possible for all Galician Jews to come here! In this town alone we have thirty Eastern Jewish families!"

"What is that, Herr Doktor Rabbiner, compared with the number of poor Jews still living in the East?" asked Herr Fishman, with deep feeling. "Ah, what do the German Jews know? I don't speak of you, personally, because you must know. A rabbi always knows! Do the Jews realize how lucky they are to be German Jews and live in this country? No pogroms, no persecution! They don't have to go to a strange country to breathe!"

"Please calm yourself," the rabbi said to his agitated visitor. "You misunderstand me entirely. If you think you can be happy here, try it. I will gladly help you, as much as I can." He opened the door. "Will you come and pray with us this evening?"

"I pray every day, Herr Doktor Rabbiner."

"Just say 'Herr Doktor.'"

"I pray every day, a Jew can't pray to God enough, Herr Rabbiner."

"Hm . . . I wish you good fortune, Herr Fishman."

"I thank you with all my heart for everything. Also for my children I thank you, Herr Doktor Rabbiner."

"Very good, very good. And close the door carefully when you go out."

A week later. In the synagogue, after prayer.

"Good evening, Herr Doktor."

"Good evening, Herr . . . ah, you are Herr Fishman."

"I am very happy that you dismember me, Herr Rabbiner."

"Remember, you mean. How are the children?"

"Heaven shield them from all harm! They are growing."

"And have you any plans? What are you going to do here?"

"I want to make a living. I want to find a livelihood."

"It is not an easy thing nowadays, in this country."

"Where *is* it easy, Herr Doktor?"

"Don't misunderstand me again. But all the men who have returned from the front are looking for jobs, and so far many have not found them. What can you expect? After all, you are a foreigner."

"God will help me, Herr Rabbiner."

"Yes, but what do you intend to do?"

"My dear Herr Doktor, let me speak frankly. What do you mean when you ask what I intend to do? Do you think I want to know what the air or water is made of, or what a rainbow really is, maybe? All I want is work. When a man doesn't work, he doesn't earn anything and he can't live. But I must live. I have two children."

"But have you any prospects?"

"You have probably heard of Herr Haskel Weiss; his wife has been taking care of my children. This Herr Weiss is a travelling man, he sells underwear. I am going to do the same. He is going to get me a position with his firm."

"But your German is far from perfect as yet."

"I'll learn it while travelling. I can't go to school very well just now. I have my living to make."

"I wish you success, Herr Fishman."

"A thousand thanks, Herr Doktor."

"What for?"

"Well, there is something to be thankful for."

The Kids Are Puzzled

I HAD completely forgotten what my father looked like. I had also forgotten what it was like to have a father. The war was over, and all of a sudden a postcard came, then the train, and then he was saying: "My poor children, my poor children."

But Father spoke only Yiddish, and that displeased me very much. Gentiles made fun of people who spoke Yiddish, and I didn't want my father to be made fun of.

Also, he spoke much too loudly when we were walking in the street. People would look back at us and grin. I was very much ashamed. There was no need to attract people's attention. All Father had to do was to learn German, and then nobody would poke fun at him. Otherwise he should follow the example of Dvora Weiss, who never opened her mouth in public because her German was not good. I wanted to tell him all that.

I made a sacred vow. I resolved to keep that vow for ever. This was my vow: I will never speak any language but German! I will never talk loudly on the street! . . .

"Tomorrow you won't go to school," Father said. "You will explain to the teacher that your father is back from the war."

"Then you must write me an excuse," I said and brought paper and pen.

"What shall I write? Does your teacher understand Yiddish?" Father asked.

"No, only German."

"Your grandmother could write German, but I know only Yiddish."

"I get the best marks in writing," I said proudly. "I can write the excuse and you can sign it."

"All right," said Father.

I wrote a letter and Father signed it. He read the letter and said: "You wrote 'war' with an *o*. That isn't right, is it?"

I thought: What does Father know about it? He can't write at all. . . .

"I get the best marks in spelling," I said.

"I won't argue," said Father. "But I think . . ."

"I didn't make a single mistake in the last dictation," I said, "and what do you know about it?"

Father looked at me and shook his head.

Later, when I was alone with Herman, I said: "I know more than he does."

Every day Father went to the synagogue. On days when there was no school we had to go, too. Formerly we had played soccer in our free time. "I like to play soccer," I explained.

"Is that so? You like to play soccer?" Father shook his head. "But which is more important—to pray or to play soccer?"

"On *Shabbes* a Jew mustn't work," he said. "I don't want you to go to school on *Shabbes*."

Frau Weiss explained that it was impossible.

"Then at least they should not write," he said. "It is not permitted to write on *Shabbes*."

I had to say in class that my father did not allow me to write on the Sabbath.

"Tell your father that there are no favourites in my class. Jew or Gentile, everybody must work!" said the teacher angrily.

"But he won't let me," I said. "I can't help it. My father is orthodox."

"You definitely refuse to write?" the teacher challenged.

"I am not allowed to," was all I could say.

"You're certainly stubborn!" he cried. "Go stand in the corner, yes, turn your face to the wall. And think it over, whether you will or won't write! And no fidgeting!"

For a whole hour I had to stand in the corner. I couldn't turn around, sit down, make the slightest move. My hands had to rest on the seams of my trousers. My face almost touched the white wall. My eyes saw nothing but a white surface. . . . While standing there I dreamed of many things. The class watched me and the teacher closely. The teacher kept waiting for me to move so as to have a pretext for punishing me further. But I did not move. Again and again I said to myself: I must be strong, I am strong, I

am stronger than the class, stronger than the teacher, I am a Jew, I am a strong Jew, I am a strong Jewish boy. . . . I dreamed that Father gave me a letter explaining everything so I wouldn't have to argue with the teacher. But at the same time I heard Father's voice saying softly: "What shall I write? I always make such big mistakes, the teacher will only laugh. . . ." I dreamed that Father came to school with me and personally spoke to the teacher. But again I heard Father's voice: "How can I talk to the teacher? He won't understand me! Talk to him yourself!" As though talking to such teachers could help any! Still, if they had to be talked to, it was better that I and not Father should do the talking. For Father would only disgrace me. . . . I dreamed that I was Judas Maccabæus rising up against my enemies, the teacher and the hostile class, and that I prevailed over them all, just as Judas Maccabæus prevailed.

After the lesson the teacher allowed me to go back to my seat. At last I could sit down. But the others were dismissed. I was kept an hour after school!

"Well, have you been thinking it over?" the teacher asked later. "You've had plenty of time!"

"I do not write on the Sabbath. I am a Jew," I said, and I was furious that he would not understand. "This has nothing to do with my father. I am a Jew, too."

The teacher simply looked at me in surprise.

"You may go," he said.

I said good-bye and went.

"Stop, come back," he called after me.

"I beg your pardon?" I said.

"You must promise me to make up your work at home every Sunday."

"I will catch up with everything," I promised and thanked him. Never let anybody get the better of you, I thought.

Father had a new idea: he wanted me to study Hebrew in my

free time. Reading, writing, and translating. It was true that every week I had an hour of religion with Cantor Bamberger, but that wasn't enough for my father. He had an Eastern Jewish tutor come to our house every afternoon. "Now I'll never be able to go to the playground," I complained.

"Learning is more important than playing soccer," Father declared.

To the tutor, Father said: "In Strody, Jacob went to a *cheder*. He had a good *melamed* there. That reminds me, I wonder what happened to that Mottke Reich. He taught Jacob plenty. At the age of six my son knew whole chapters of the prayer book. He could recite them from memory page after page, paragraph after paragraph. And now he knows nothing. But I want him to study our sacred language, Herr Baron."

The tutor was no baron; Herr Baron was his name. When Father left us alone, I told him right off that I had no desire to learn Hebrew. "Hebrew isn't a real language," I said. "Who speaks that language, anyway?"

Herr Baron tried to arouse my interest. "All our great scholars wrote their sacred books in the sacred language," he said.

I was not much impressed.

"Wacker beat Rasensport, one to nothing," I told him. "But they wouldn't have won if Rasensport hadn't had bad luck. Bummel fell and killed himself!"

"Oi! How did he do that? Did he take poison or did he shoot himself?" Herr Baron was terrified.

Now I had something to laugh about.

"I'll have to explain," I said, trying to teach my teacher something sensible. "Wacker and Rasensport are two soccer clubs that had a game last Sunday. Bummel is Rasensport's goal-keeper. And 'to kill yourself' means to shoot the ball into your own goal."

"Hebrew is easier," said Herr Baron. . . .

His lessons were hopelessly boring. He made me translate from Hebrew into German, but he had no method at all. He kept say-

ing: "What do we need a method for? A thing is this or that. Don't keep on asking: Why? Just learn it by heart."

He sat by my side picking his teeth and ears. That made me nervous.

"If you ask me, you ought to learn German," I told him.

Before our father's return, when we lived alone with Frau Weiss, fewer things were forbidden us than now.

Now, every morning, as soon as we got up, we had to pray. Before going to bed we had to pray again. And after meals too. And we had to keep our heads covered, at home and in the street. Father watched us closely. I often told myself that I used to have more fun before he came back. . . .

Every night Father studied German. He had bought a spelling book. A spelling book for six-year-olds! Why, even Herman was more advanced!

He sat with us at the table. We, his children, were already reading fairy-tales and stories. But Father hadn't got that far yet. He copied words from the spelling book into his notebook.

"You have a long way to go before you can read my fairy-tale book, Father," I said.

He often made mistakes in spelling. Many times he asked me whether he had spelled a certain word correctly.

"No," I would say, and set him right. Even when he didn't ask me I would point out his mistakes.

"All your mistakes are due to carelessness," I reproached him. "You must work harder."

"All right, all right," said Father. "Now let me have my copy-book."

To Frau Weiss he complained: "They have no respect for me at all."

"All the men who come back from the war complain about their children," she replied.

And then Father became a travelling salesman.

The Widower

EVERY Monday, Yossel Fishman set out on his rounds; he didn't get back until Friday shortly before nightfall. One week was like another. His life consisted of calling on customers, talking with them, showing them merchandise, filling out order blanks, filling out many order blanks every day. A time would come, he dreamed, when he would no longer have to travel, but would be "independent," the proprietor of his own shop with his customers coming to him.

He represented "Health Underwear, Inc.," a Leipzig firm. His territory comprised fifty-one villages; many of the small ones could be reached only on foot. His customers were railroad employees, farmers and farm hands, innkeepers, mechanics, bank clerks, and a few rural schoolmasters. He sold them underwear bearing the label "Pyramid Grade A." His collection comprised underdrawers, undershirts, shirts, knitted vests with or without leather backs, hosiery from Chemnitz, woollen blankets, and even elastic stockings, flannel waistbands, and corsets.

His firm was a solidly established concern.

His firm gave no credit.

His firm delivered C.O.D. and accepted complaints only if sent by registered mail immediately on receipt of merchandise. If a complaint was accepted, the firm expressly refused to take into account any currency devaluation that might have occurred in the interval.

Every Christmas, the firm sent a calendar and three kitchen towels as a present to every customer. Star customers received six kitchen towels.

Health Underwear, Inc., was famous in all parts of Germany. Everybody knew the label Pyramid Grade A. In Central Germany alone the firm employed more than seventy travelling salesmen.

Yossel Fishman was one of them. Herr Haskel Weiss had secured him the job. . . .

Once every two or three months, Fishman appears in the village. It is a tiny village far removed from any railroad. Arriving after a long tramp, he begins to smile. In the street he smiles at everyone who passes by—children, servants, housewives. Then, in the customer's house, he keeps on smiling—at the cat, at the children, at the customer's wife, at the customer. His smile is like the smile of a deaf-mute. An Eastern Jewish smile, the smile of a homeless wanderer, of a man among strangers, of a man ill at ease in the language he is forced to speak.

"Hello, Joseph," says his customer. "Back again? Sit down and rest yourself before you start cheating us out of house and home!"

"I never cheat anybody," gasps Fishman, breathless from his walk. Then, wearily, he sits down.

The customer is not a businessman. Therefore, in his eyes, everyone connected with a business house is a cheat, and a Jewish travelling salesman is the worst cheat of all. The customer's father and grandfather and great-grandfather before him had always looked on a salesman as a cheat, and a Jewish salesman as the worst cheat of all. The customer has other inherited opinions. For instance, he looks on hunchbacks and redheads as evil beings, just as his father, his grandfather, and his great-grandfather had done before him—his great-grandfather, in fact, had believed hunchbacks and redheads to be sorcerers and magicians! The fact that the customer knows personally just one hunchback and two redheads, and that these three are perfectly decent and God-fearing, makes no difference. They are exceptions, and the customer's opinion of hunchbacks and redheads in general remains unchanged. His father, his grandfather, and his great-grandfather . . . For quite a while now the customer has been acquainted with Fishman, the Eastern Jew. He is quite fond of him, quite a decent fellow this Fishman, an

exception—but as to Jews in general . . . His father, his grandfather, and his great-grandfather . . .

"I know, I know," says the customer with a twinkle in his eye. "Every manufacturer gives his merchandise away, and that's what your firm does. Anyway, you're a pleasant old cuss."

"I'm no old cuss!" To Fishman the term "cuss" is unclear. Whenever anyone uses the word in his presence, he thrusts it away from him with a defensive gesture.

"Cherman langvitch, hard langvitch!" the customer laughs. "I didn't mean to offend you. When I call you 'an old cuss' I only mean to be friendly. How are the children?"

"How should they be? They are in school. The oldest is in high school, in the *Realgymnasium!*"

"Of course he is, what with you making hundreds of marks out of people like us!"

"With the inflation, everybody makes hundreds of marks. But what are they worth?"

"And you haven't remarried yet?"

"No, what do I need a wife for?"

"To go to bed with, Joseph," the customer replies, with a leer.

"I've got other things to worry about," says Fishman, blushing, and he begins to unfold his collection.

"But it wouldn't hurt your children to have a mother! You know, Joseph, I have a cousin who would be quite the thing for you. She's forty, but she looks much younger. Do you want to meet her? You're a hard worker, you can support a wife. If you insist, she'll become Jewish. I'll bet she'd even agree to be circumcised!"

"Don't make fun of my bereavement," the widower sighs.

Then, smacking his lips with enthusiasm, he displays his collection. Today he particularly recommends long lavender underdrawers. He also has short white ones, but he does not advise them, he doesn't like them himself—of course he has to show them be-

cause they are a part of his collection, but to an old customer he'd rather say frankly and straight out that "the white underdrawers are nothing but *tineff*."

"That's what I like about you, Joseph," says the customer, approvingly. "At least you never try to sell us *tineff*." The customer has learned what the word *tineff* means. He knows other Yiddish words too, such as *nebbich*, *chutzpeh*, as well as *schlemiehl*.

All in all, he gets along very well with Fishman. "Listen, *schlemiehl*, my wife wants a down comforter," he says, laughing uproariously at his own knowledge of Yiddish, which he thinks is quite *kolossal*.

Yossel Fishman had many customers who, as German soldiers on the eastern front, had picked up a few Yiddish words in Warsaw or Kiev. They never tired of telling him what "nice people" the Eastern Jews were, and how German soldiers in the East preferred to be billeted with Jews. Nevertheless, Herr Fishman was wretched each time his customers made fun of his pronunciation. And since he believed that his mastery of German was "almost complete" and that he was well thought of here in Germany, he was annoyed with himself for being so wretched. He would say to himself: In the first place they are making fun, not of me alone but of all Jews, and in the second place every *goy* is an anti-Semite. . . . That was how Herr Yossel Fishman comforted himself. And this Jewish "wisdom" enabled him to swallow all affronts, just as one accepts death because everybody dies.

A travelling salesman has a good deal to put up with. The widower was not a bad salesman; he was clever at concealing disappointment. He would not let himself be offended by jokes, he refused to let anything get under his skin. ("Suppose I did let it get under my skin, what could I do about it?") He never complained. ("What good would it do me to complain?") He never argued. The customer was always right; a good salesman never cares

about being right, what he wants is orders. In Galicia, Fishman had done business under worse circumstances.

Each time he visited one of his villages, knocking timidly on his customers' doors and humbly, almost anxiously, asking for orders, he was surprised that his customers should remember him and call him by name. He was insignificant, undistinguished (so he thought), he was a small man with a sad face. He always carried heavy sample cases, he was always wiping his sweating brow with a large handkerchief. Every night his handkerchief was soaking wet.

He didn't like to think about his former life. He fled from his memories. He forced himself to think only of his present work, his present life. Could he think of the past without offending God? Wasn't his life—his torn, bungled, absurd, womanless life—the life God had given him? Were not such thoughts a sacrilege, unworthy of a Jew? . . .

He preferred dreaming to thinking. Not that there was a clear distinction in his mind between the two. But sometimes, at night, waiting for sleep in a hotel bed, he tried to evoke his dead wife, in images rather than thoughts. He seldom succeeded. He had even forgotten how she wore her thick, black hair. This forgetfulness frightened him. Her face, her body, everything was vague. He was worried, distressed. Leah had been dead only a few years, and already he was unable to remember what she looked like. There he lay, tired, overworked, tormenting himself about his past like an old man. And yet he was only thirty-five. . . .

Dream followed dream. Long ago, before the war, he had tried to make a new life in America, but the attempt had failed. What was America like? He could no longer remember; all memory of America had left him. His memories of the war, too, and of the hunger and hardships he had been through, were vanishing as though in a mist. Now he was a widower, he had two sons, he was a travelling salesman, there were bugs and mice in the hotel, the

mice squeaked all night long, in all cheap hotels, the mice squeaked. . . . I must make money, and if I have a little luck the children will have a better life. . . . And should I remarry? . . . And if I do remarry, it will be only for the children's sake. . . . But whom shall I marry? . . . Friday I shall be home. In the meantime Frau Dvora Weiss is taking care of the children. It's lucky she loves my children. . . . She sees to it that they get a bath and clean clothes every Friday afternoon. . . . They must be clean for *Shabbes*. . . . I, Yossel Fishman, am their father . . . but who is their mother? Their mother is dead. . . .

From time to time a vivid memory would emerge in his mind. A Galician inn, a tune, a sentimental Yiddish tune. . . . He dreamed of his wedding, of sweet drinks and spicy honey cake, of musicians and gay dances, of a young bridegroom and a young bride. . . . Once, he mused, and it hurt him, once I, too, was a bridegroom and Leah was my bride. . . .

At home, too, in the womanless apartment where he lived with his two sons, wanting to be a mother to them as well as a father, these bitter-sweet fantasies sometimes swept over him. At those moments his pince-nez would slide farther and farther down his nose, his nose would grow redder and redder, and his eyes would grow moist behind the round glasses. Often, at such moments, he closed his eyes. His children felt his thoughts, and observed him stealthily. They sat by his side, the kerosene lamp singing between them. Quietly they would nudge one another: Is he asleep or crying?

Every Friday evening Jews sit around a festive board. The housewife lights white candles in silver candlesticks. The master of the house says the blessing for the whole family over a goblet of wine and freshly baked *Shabbesberches*. He then passes everyone at the table the goblet for a drink, and a piece of the *berches*.

The widower and his two children eat their Friday evening meal at the table of Haskel Weiss and his wife Dvora. The master of

the house is Haskel Weiss, the Fishmans are guests. To spare the widower's feelings, Dvora Weiss puts in front of him a silver goblet and two small *berches*—just as she does for the master of the house. According to Haskel Weiss, this permits Yossel Fishman to say the blessing for himself and his children. The widower's sad, broken voice is nothing new to Dvora Weiss, yet each time he says the blessing she runs to the kitchen and weeps. And each time her husband has to call her: "Well? How about the first course, Dvorele?"

Dvora Weiss brings the first course: chopped eggs and onions with chicken fat. "The onions!" She smiles, wiping her tears. "The onions!"

"Thank you," says the widower without looking up, and he thinks: Leah used to put in chopped chicken livers too. . . .

Dvora Weiss brings in the fish, cooked with sweet raisin sauce.

"Thank you," says the widower sadly, and he thinks: Leah always used to give me the head, but here of course the head goes to Haskel Weiss, and it's only fair, he is the master of the house. I am only thinking how it used to be. . . .

Dvora Weiss brings in the noodle soup.

"Thank you," says the widower and thinks: Leah . . .

Dvora Weiss brings in the meat garnished with large white beans, then the compote or pastry, and finally she brings peppered chickpeas and glasses of tea for everybody. And each time the widower says hoarsely: "Thank you," and thinks: Leah . . .

Haskel Weiss teaches his friend's children the right way to drink tea. "No, you don't put the sugar in the glass. You bite off a piece, then you take the piece between your teeth, and you sip the tea through it, this way, look! This way!"

The widower sits there absorbed in his dream.

From time to time Frau Weiss flies into a fit of rage.

"Why don't you get married?" she cries. "Can't you find a wife? There are hundreds of thousands of women who'd be happy with a man like you!"

"With two children?"

"There are millions of women who'd be happy with these children!" childless Frau Weiss insists.

"Now let us say grace," Haskel Weiss proposes.

But afterward Frau Weiss asks again: "So why don't you get married? Get married!"

As time went on, the widower began to accustom himself to this idea. Perhaps it would be better, after all, if he again had his own Friday evening table. . . .

The thought made him nervous. He shouted at his children. Often, without meaning to, he would strike them.

Poor Lina

FRAU ZIPFEL had gone to an old people's home with her tomcat Peter, and her apartment in the rear was now occupied by the Bieber family. Old Bieber was a porter, his wife worked at home knitting children's dresses, and their unmarried daughter Paula was a part-time waitress.

A terrible thing happened to Paula. She had told her family that she was engaged to a young man in town, whom they had never met, and she kept promising to bring him home soon and introduce him to her parents. She went on pretending that she met him after work every day and that he was a member of the secret police and had, for that reason, to keep his address and even his name secret. Her father never believed a word of it, but her mother believed the whole romantic story because she wanted to. The truth was, however, that Paula's mysterious fiancé had deserted her long before, and when she could no longer conceal her condition, there remained nothing for her to do but to confess. She

had to admit that her whole story had been a pack of lies, that she knew no one in the secret police, and that she had no idea who the father of her child was.

"What, you don't even know his name?"

No, unfortunately, she really didn't know his name. The thing had happened so long ago, it was several months now. Besides, she could never remember a name, not even from one day to the next, and now she was so ashamed. . . .

"Can you imagine!" said Frau Bieber when Lina Kupke dropped in and found Paula in a flood of tears. "The slut!"

But then she felt sorry for her daughter.

"You've got good reason to be ashamed, but stop howling when Frau Kupke is here! Well, there's nothing you can do now. Here she is with her big belly, and the scoundrel has had his fun and he can't be made to pay for it—just because you didn't take the trouble to find out his name! Stop it, for goodness' sake! It's all right! I won't say another word!" she comforted the weeping girl.

Frau Kupke said sweetly: "Poor little thing," but she couldn't prevent a smug expression from crossing her face.

Frau Bieber saw it and was filled with indignation. "Ah, I'll fix you!" she said to herself. "You need a lesson, you and your husband!"

And that is how Lina found out about Kupke and his job.

"How is your husband? Has he got his tools back?" Frau Bieber inquired with a hypocritical smile.

"His tools? What tools?"

"What? Didn't you know that he lost his job as turner in the factory?"

Poor Lina! Frau Bieber's shaft had found its mark.

"I didn't know a thing about it!" Lina gasped, and sank weakly into a chair.

"Don't pretend! You must know!"

"How should I know? Herman never tells me anything."

"It's a long time now since he was fired from the turners' shop!"

He's only a packer now. And he's telling everybody how mad he is because his tools were taken away from him. They left him only a hammer. To nail the boxes."

"I can't believe it," said Lina. "Where did you get all that?"

"I heard it from my brother, who works for Scheibe and Koch. And your husband is sore at Winkler, the foreman, because he thinks it's his doing. He goes around telling everybody he'll beat him up. He'd even like to shoot him, he says. Has he got a gun?"

"No," Lina lied.

That evening she told her husband that she knew everything.

"What if you do? I'm going to get him. Now you know that too."

"Be sensible. You should be glad to have a job in the packing department."

"Is that so? Glad? So you're taking Winkler's part! It's nothing to you that he takes my tools away? He left me with an old hammer! What good is that?"

"You don't need any tools to be a packer!"

"It's plain injustice, taking my tools away! I'm going after Winkler, Lina, and I'll get him. He thinks he can treat me any way he wants to because I'm not in the union. Well, he's mistaken. He's lying when he says he has to rehire the expert turners back from the front. I don't believe it! And I'm a good turner myself! So, just because I used to be a truck driver I have to give up my job to an expert turner? I'm expert myself now! It's nothing but excuses! But he's gone too far, treating me this way! I'll show him who I am! The gun is loaded. All I have to do is pull the trigger! I learned how to finish a guy off, and now I'm going to. . . ."

Lina fled in anguish to the bedroom, and crept under her blanket.

She had known that he owned a gun. Once she had surprised him when he was oiling it. But she had never dared take it away from him. He had had this gun ever since the strange peace had broken out, the peace that refused to become a real peace. Lina remembered vividly the grey November days of the year before. When the

war had ended so suddenly, at a moment when no one thought that peace could ever come again, everyone at Scheibe and Koch's was terrified. Everything had come as a surprise, the armistice and the closing of the munitions factories; and then many men had actually begun to come back from the front. And all of a sudden the three hundred and sixty women and twelve men had no more hand grenades to turn.

Lina had been greatly disturbed by all these events. Not because the war had ended—no, she was thankful for that—but because the Kaiser had taken to his heels and poor Germany was left without a responsible government, and because all the departments of Scheibe and Koch's were being invited to vote for the election of "workers' and soldiers' councils," so that somebody might take over the government; otherwise everything would come tumbling down. Each department was asked to choose one delegate, and in the one where Lina and her husband worked, all the women raised their hands when someone proposed Herman Kupke, because Herman was the only man in the department. And it was Herman's election that had so distressed Lina in November 1918! I was always against it, she thought now. She had never wanted her Herman to go into politics, flattered though she was by his election. But he hadn't listened to his wife, that's how it always is. Moreover, he joined the "Independent Socialists," but they threw him out after a week, and then he went over to the Spartakists; they at least were a tough outfit, as he told Lina, who couldn't get over his knowing so much about all these things. But he was soon fed up with the Spartakists, and all politics, so at least he had said. Lina was glad. She had always told him that no good would ever come of meddling with politics. Politics is just another pretext for men to sit in bars and spend their wages on liquor, and that was what distressed her more than anything. Hadn't her first husband given her trouble enough? No, not with politics, but with boozing! She was sincerely thankful, and felt relieved of a great burden when she heard that Herman had dropped out. "I guess the Sparta-

kists kicked you out, too?" she said. "High time for you to get some sense."

And now, for some time, he had no longer been a turner at the factory—and she had had to learn the news from strangers. And, what was worse, he was plotting something! If only he didn't have a gun, that gun which she knew had been in the apartment since last November! She was scared, scared stiff!

She heard him open the door and sneak out. She began to gulp, ah, if only she could cry—that would relieve her, but for some reason she could not cry.

She was quite alone in the apartment. Indeed, she was alone much of the time these days. Herman, though no longer engaged in politics, spent most of his free time in Müller's saloon. If only she had kept on living alone, if only she hadn't remarried. . . . You never see your mistakes until it's too late. Now it was too late and now Lina realized that she had really loved her drunkard, her nice harmless drunkard, her first husband. He hadn't been so bad after all. Herman Kupke was much worse, a woman-beater, a public enemy. . . .

And all of a sudden, while she was thinking all this, she was seized with a strange, overwhelming desire—to get up, take her first husband's picture out of the closet, and hang it on the wall. Now we'll see whether he has the only say here, she thought; that will show him I'm fed up and that I won't stand for the way he treats me. I'll hang the picture in the kitchen, right over the table. . . .

She found the picture. She lit a lamp in the kitchen and hung the picture exactly in the middle of the wall, between the table and the massive kitchen cupboard. Her heart beat with delight: I'd like to see his face when he comes home and finds that; at last I've thought up something to get a rise out of him, thank God for that at least. . . .

Suddenly she became conscious that she had been speaking her thoughts aloud, and conscious of something else, too, that Herman

had not gone out at all! He was still there! He was sitting right there in the corner! All the time he had been watching and listening! He was staring at her with a strange look!

"What is it?" Lina cried. "Now you know everything," she went on breathlessly.

Then she looked at his hands.

He was holding the gun! It was black! Oily! He was aiming it at her!

With a shriek that nobody heard, not even herself, she fled back into her bedroom.

Feivel Wants to Die Right Away

THAT same year Jewish refugees from the Ukraine came to Germany. Some came to our town. The young men often stayed at 21 Castle Street, with Haskel Weiss or with us. They prayed three times a day. Father was proud of these young people and their piety. "They may have come without much baggage," he kept repeating, "but not one has forgotten his phylacteries."

When they weren't praying, they were arguing with Herr Weiss, Frau Weiss, or Father. "The Ukraine, dear friends, the Ukraine is a beautiful country in spite of everything," they insisted. "At home . . ." They were eloquent about its beauties. "Oi! Our woods, and our fields, and our villages! And even our peasants, when nobody incites them against us, are decent peasants. We used to get along with them quite well, until the trouble started and they came to kill us. But did they come of their own will? Our Ukrainian peasants have no such ideas, they don't come to kill of their own will. Have we ever done them any harm? They came because they were sent! It's a very beautiful country, our Ukraine! It's very nice there!"

•

But Father remarked: "Maybe. But not for us Jews."

"Not for us Jews? But what country *is* nice for us Jews?"

"Yes, Reb Fishman, what country *is* nice for us Jews?"

"Are you asking a question?" inquired Father. "Now you're beginning to ask questions!"

"Who is asking questions? Are we, Ukrainian Jews, asking questions? A Ukrainian doesn't ask questions! Only a Galician! *You* have begun to ask questions! And why? Only because you don't want to believe that our country . . ."

"All right, all right, I believe everything. Let's not argue."

"Really, let's not argue," Frau Weiss begged, too.

"We're not arguing! But our Ukraine is really a beautiful country!"

"All right," said Haskel Weiss, "your Ukraine is really a very beautiful country."

Every day our apartment or Herr Weiss's apartment was as full as a hotel. Full of strangers, strangers studying German or some other language. When they walked in the street, everybody stopped and looked at them because they talked so loudly, in Yiddish.

"Why must you shout like that?" Father would say angrily. I thought: Not so long ago you used to shout Yiddish in the street, too. . . .

The refugees maintained that we were real Germans, that we couldn't understand anything because we were living in a free country, without pogroms. Sure, the inflation was bad, the poverty was terrible, but we were lucky just the same. . . . I thought: Father is always complaining that we are poor foreigners in this country, that we are having a hard time . . . and now refugees come and envy us! The first people to envy us! . . .

Once there arrived a refugee named David Blau; he slept in our kitchen on a mattress.

"Lucky people you are!" he said, like everybody else. "You have no Petlura!"

"Who is Petlura?" I inquired.

"He's a gang leader, a pogromist, a scoundrel, a murderer!" cried David. "He has massacred fifty thousand Jews."

That day as usual our apartment was full of people.

"Why did Petlura do that?" I inquired.

"Because he is an anti-Semite!" one explained.

"Because we are Jews," said another.

"So much blood has been shed that we don't understand ourselves why and how people can be such beasts."

"In our town the gangs were told that we were friends of the Bolsheviks. That was what started the pogrom."

"And in our town the gangs were told the exact opposite. They were told that we were anti-Bolsheviks. And that set off the pogrom in our place."

David took me on his knee. "I will explain to you why they make pogroms. Why, for instance, does a big dog always jump on a little kitten?"

"That's not true," I said. "There's a porter named Bieber who lives in our house. He has a big dog that never jumps on cats. He even plays with cats in the house."

"That dog is an exception," David said. "I never saw a dog like that in our Ukraine."

"Why, I have seen such dogs in the Ukraine," someone said. "My word of honour!" he added when all the Ukrainians looked at him sceptically.

"Go to bed now," said Father. "You only make them nervous. They don't like to be asked questions all the time!"

"Not at all!" protested the guests. "Let him ask questions. He should know for later."

"See?" I said to Father.

"Go to bed!" Father said sternly.

That time I went.

The refugees sat around for hours, they had so much to tell each other; they drank one glass of tea after another. "We don't want to be rude," they said, "but in our Ukraine the tea is much better than in Germany." They drank it nevertheless, sticking a piece of sugar between their teeth and sipping the boiling tea through it; their lips seemed insensible to the heat. Herr Weiss nudged me. "Now take a good look—that's the right way to drink tea!"

Always they talked about the same things.

"It takes trouble to make you smart!" they lamented.

But despite their wisdom they could never make up their minds what to do.

"Well, shall we stay here?"

"Germany won't let us stay. The police want to deport us. All the Ukrainians must go."

"I have an idea! Let's tell the police that in a few months we'll go to Palestine or America! Of course we won't go, and in three months everybody will be taking us for granted. Why travel all over the world? Are we gipsies? What we want is a roof over our heads, and our own lamp in our own room, and our own dishes and our own knives and our own bread and our own tea, the way we had in the Ukraine. What do *you* think, Reb Fishman? Can a man make a living here?"

Father said: "It's hard here. But we'll see. No Jew starves when he's in town with other Jews. So don't look so sad, Feivel! What's the trouble?"

"I don't know," sighed Feivel, whom everybody thought a little touched.

They kept asking each other questions.

"So where do you want to go?"

"Wherever they let me."

"Do you speak languages?"

"Why not? It's true that I've never tried, but other people do! You study and then you talk. So I will study and talk, too."

"I will die," said Feivel darkly.

"We shall all die," David comforted him.

"I will die soon," Herr Feivel insisted.

"Shame on you! People are trying to help you, aren't they?"

"Help me? Who's helping me? They keep sending me from one office to another," Herr Feivel complained. "How many refugee offices have I been in already? How many times have I been inspected, numbered, photographed, registered in books and notebooks and big blanks and little blanks and green and red and yellow filing-cards, in red and in blue and in black ink, with all kinds of signs in front of my name and all kinds of numbers after my name. And I had to sign my name a hundred times. And what's the result? They told me: 'You can't stay, Herr Feivel.' So they send me from one town to another. And again into offices with books and blanks and cards and records and numbers and signs! What's the purpose of all that?"

Nobody seemed to know the purpose.

"Then they tell me to go to the police. So of course I went there, right away. The police told me: 'You did the right thing coming here, you must report to the police. . . .' Then I said: 'It's a good thing I've come, so I'm reporting to you. . . .' Then the police said: 'It's not so simple. First you must get a resident's permit, proving that you may stay in Germany, and then a certificate from the labour office allowing you to work in Germany. . . .' Did they give me the permits from those offices? No, they gave me no permission to do anything! So I went back to the police and I said: 'Good morning, here I am again, I have no permits but I must report, that's the law, I can't stay here without reporting to the police. . . .' Then the police answer: 'Yes, that's right, but we absolutely can't register you without permits from the residence office and the labour office. You must go back there. . . .' So I went back again to both of those offices. And what do you think happened to me there?"

Everybody seemed to know what happened to him there.

"They kicked me out. Then I went to the police once again.

This time the police didn't say much. They just asked: 'Got your permits?' 'No,' I said. So they handed me a slip saying that I had to leave the country for not reporting, and that I was an undesirable alien, just because I had not registered with them. 'What!' I cried. 'This is impossible! Three times I begged you to *register me*, and now you say that I haven't registered! . . .' That's what I said to the police, just as I'm saying it to you now. But do you think it did any good? And what's more . . ."

"What is more?"

"What's more, I didn't take my birth certificate with me. I didn't know that you have to run away with a birth certificate. Maybe I never had a birth certificate. How do I know? And now nobody believes that I am really myself. . . ."

"Have a glass of tea, Feivel," said Frau Weiss with a sigh. "Some day the Jews will be better off. You yourself will be better off some day, God willing."

Herr Feivel emitted a mirthless giggle, then he stared at everyone with glassy eyes and uttered his daily threat: "I will die soon."

Of course he did not die, although others died who had not threatened to. But the police made his life unendurable. Because of his missing birth certificate he was actually given an expulsion order, and toward the end of February 1920 he told everyone that he was fed up with this country! He didn't want to thrust himself upon it, thank God there was no need to, this wasn't the only country in the world. . . . And with these words he said farewell for ever. His dream was Antwerp. He had heard that Eastern Jewish diamond-cutters lived there, and he decided to become a diamond-cutter himself. Diamonds—well, that would be something sure, not like the German mark, which at present was good only for wiping your something, begging your pardon. . . .

But we shall see that it was not a farewell for ever. . . .

Wobbly-Knee and His Establishment

NEW records were being compiled in our school, and everyone had to give his name, his father's name, his birthplace and birth-date. First the Protestants of the class were called on to give the necessary information, then the two Catholics, finally the three Jews.

"What is your name?"

"Benno Nadel."

"What is your father's name?"

"M. Nadel."

"So it's Moses Nadel," Professor Opel sneered. He stuck his thumbs in his vest and spoke through his nose. "The son's name is Benno, and the father's name is Moses."

The class laughed, roared, applauded. Only the three Jews were still.

"No," said the hunchback, biting his protruding lower lip. "His name is M. Nadel."

"Maybe M. stands for Isidor in your language, my Benno *leben*?"

The class was almost hysterical. Some literally moaned with laughter.

"Quiet!" ordered Professor Opel. "What is there to laugh about? I am not being funny, am I?" Complacently he looked over toward his particular favourites.

Benno was sobbing.

"What a sissy you are, my Benno *leben*!" said Professor Opel with assumed tenderness, and went down the aisle. "What pretty black curls!" he said, stroking Benno's hair with an air of extreme caution. "Stop your crying!"

He removed his hand from Benno's head, held it out carefully before him as though it were a soiled towel, and washed it carefully at the basin, letting the water flow over it for a long time.

Benno's tears, too, kept flowing. Professor Opel seemed to soap his hands for an eternity, all the while winking and grimacing at the guffawing class.

"Now, now, sit down, little Benno, darling. Are there any more Jews in the class?"

"Two!" everybody shouted, pointing to Heinz Levy and myself.

"What's your name?" Professor Opel asked me.

"Jacob Fishman."

"Is your father's name Moses, too?"

No one was laughing yet. Everybody awaited my answer with intense expectation. I pondered it carefully. I was in no hurry. Finally I said: "No. Joseph."

"Are you sure?"

"Yes, sir."

"Where were you born?"

"In Strody."

"Where is that?"

"In Galicia."

Professor Opel, with a look of distaste, put down the class register and his pen, and came toward me.

"So you are an Eastern Jew?"

I could hear the vileness in his voice. I could feel the curiosity of the pupils around me. I was silent.

"What does your father do?"

"He is a merchant."

"Naturally! And what does he sell, your father *leben*?"

My ears began to hum as if bees were buzzing in them. I thought: I mustn't sob like Benno. Opel would be only too pleased if I did. From now on I won't answer. What can he do about it? Nothing. . . .

"Did you hear me? What is your father's business, what does Herr Moses Fishman from Galicia do?"

I looked into his fat face. I read in it the self-satisfied smugness of a man who fancies he is God knows what just because he was not born a Jew, just because he belongs to the non-Jewish majority. His satisfaction, his joy at my helplessness were clearly visible. The beast, I thought, is nearly fifty years old, and I am almost thirteen, but at thirteen a Jew is a man, I thought. . . . He may be as funny as he likes, but I'd rather be beaten dead than say a word, than answer him. Besides, he won't kill me, this cowardly pig, I thought. As you can see, I was not too particular at that moment about the words I used to express my thoughts, at least to myself, but I was infuriated and I did not feel at all like choosing undeservedly nice names for Opel.

I thought: I mustn't be scared by his shouting! The more excited he gets, the calmer I will be! He can't control himself, but I can! He won't draw a word out of me today!

"Did you hear me? I asked you a question!"

I looked straight into his eyes as he stood there in front of me, not much bigger than I was. When we played Indians nobody was allowed to blink his eyes, not even when tied to the post, and that was not so easy; the others would fire an air pistol at a target placed a few inches above the head of the "pale-faced prisoner." . . . I thought: You are a mangy Sioux, you're in conspiracy with criminals who bought you for a barrel of firewater, but now you're going to tremble at the sight of my eagle eye. . . . And so it turned out! Opel's eyes began to blink!

"Sit down!" he hissed, and turned away from me. Slowly he walked back to his desk. "I'll talk to you again, you good-for-nothing!" he threatened, staring at me as if only he and I were in the classroom. Then he yelled:

"Next Jew!"

"Heinz Levy," murmured Heinz Levy, standing up slowly.

"Repeat it! Louder!" shouted Opel.

"Heinz Levy."

"And what is your father's business?" The question was pronounced in a casual tone; this time Opel's voice had nothing sharp in it, it was a sly, calculating voice.

"I don't quite understand you," said Heinz Levy.

"Are you hard of hearing, Levy?"

"No, sir."

"So what is Herr Levy Senior's business?"

"He was killed at the front in 1916."

Professor Opel turned pale.

Nervously he rustled the pages of the old register.

"Sit down," he said hoarsely. "Sit down. Right. It's noted here."

But Heinz Levy did not sit down.

"What do you want?"

"I only wanted to give you my dead father's name. It was neither Moses nor Joseph. And it wasn't Abraham, either. His name was Ernst Levy, he was called Ernst—just as you are, sir. But he died for the fatherland."

Only then did he sit down, Heinz Levy, the third Jew of the class.

Professor Opel was our class teacher. He taught us French.

That same week our aged German teacher Professor Urban, fell ill, so Professor Opel substituted for him. We wrote a composition in class on the theme of "The National Character of the Germans," Opel dictating an outline for the essay.

"Introduction: Historical Significance of the German Nation."

We wrote the heading in our copybooks.

"Development: The German Character in Its Physical Aspects—beauty of form, size, strength, and dexterity." He strolled up and down the aisles with his head in the air. "Spiritual aspects: good—natural gifts, frankness and straightforwardness, loyalty and honesty, hospitality, piety, patriotism, courage, chastity, and chivalry. . . . Did you get the word CHIVALRY? It's important!"

We had the word "chivalry."

"Now the bad aspects of the German character: excessive candour. . . . That's about all, I wouldn't know any others. And for the conclusion: the superiority of the Germans, recognized even by their enemies, will enable them some day again to play an important part in history. . . . That's all; you may start. The time limit is three hours."

On Wednesday afternoons there was no school.

One Wednesday afternoon, the *Jungsturm* held a roll-call. The lower grades had no idea what the *Jungsturm* was. We did not even know that we had no idea about it. Zunk, who taught gymnastics in the high school as well as in the elementary grades, explained that the *Jungsturm* was a magnificent movement, a national movement. "National"—we had no clear idea what that word meant. But "magnificent"—twelve-year-olds understood that word very well indeed. Moreover, we knew that almost the entire school belonged to the *Jungsturm*; only the weaklings and those whom Zunk didn't like were excluded. I was proud not to be excluded when I enlisted in that magnificent movement.

The woods were snowbound. All the roads were snowbound. We were to assemble at a place called Luther's Oak. We had been informed that we couldn't assemble in town because the workers were against the *Jungsturm* and had threatened in their newspapers to beat us up if they ever caught us. When Zunk read us the Red newspaper in the gymnasium, we all cried: "Phooey!"

"But soon there will be a change!" Zunk prophesied with an air of mystery. He urged us not to speak about our magnificent movement to outsiders. Even at home we would do well not to be too talkative. "All great soldiers know how to hold their tongues!" he exclaimed. So I held my tongue, and merely told Frau Weiss that we had a school outing. She had no objection to that. I didn't need to tell Father; he was on the road.

Three hundred pupils were drawn up near Luther's Oak. Zunk,

armed with a huge map, explained the terrain, pointed at the woods full of hiding places and ambushes, and said: "This is an ideal terrain for a battle. But the battle will come later."

He first ordered us to exercise. We threw ourselves on the ground, jumped up again, deployed, ran into the woods in zigzag formation, and charged out again.

Then we had to stand motionless for a long, long time. We were not even allowed to clear our throats. It was getting colder and windier all the time.

"Standing motionless is the most important thing a soldier must learn!" Zunk assured us, stamping up and down in the snow. We stood staring straight ahead. The snow kept falling and falling.

Some distance away, we saw a few figures coming toward us. One of them was that of Doctor Grosse, a new teacher in our school, who the following day was to give us our first lesson in botany. When they came up to us, the newcomers gave the military salute and conversed with Zunk. We were as white as snowmen. There were snowflakes on our eyelids, on our noses, everywhere.

Finally two large groups were formed: The Army and the Reds. I was with the Army. We marched away, stumbling through the soft snow, while the Reds remained behind, with orders to entrench themselves where they were. Doctor Grosse ordered us to deploy and take cover. By now it was almost dark. To my right and my left I saw crouching shadows moving as I was moving. We had to avoid discovery by our enemies.

Making a wide circle, we returned to the field. "The enemy is in retreat," somebody whispered near me. The sky was dark grey. My feet were wet; so were my stockings up to my knees. An order was barked out—it was Doctor Grosse's voice—"Double time, march!"

The Reds took to their heels! We pursued them, yelling and throwing snow at them. Many of them fell; we caught them and washed their faces in snow!

A trumpet blast announced the end of the battle.

We again formed into one group, the army and the conquered workers together. Zunk and Doctor Grosse made brief speeches against the "Red rabble" and told us to go home in small groups, because the rabble was now on the lookout for us. "If anybody asks you what you've been doing in the woods, just say you've been on a school outing. Got it?"

"Yes!" we shouted.

Then, in groups of four, we went home. Snow was still falling when we reached the town, the street lamps seemed to have a sinister gleam, and I imagined that all the people I met stared suspiciously at me and they were all "Red pigs." Let them try! We of the *Jungsturm* were not afraid. We would triumph over all our enemies!

All my muscles ached. But that didn't matter.

This is how Doctor Grosse introduced himself to our class the following day:

"I am your botany teacher. Nobody is going to make me tolerate the picture of that saddler's apprentice who has been President of his Republic much too long for our good. Before my class begins I want his picture removed from the wall!"

"There has never been a picture of the President here," said the head boy of our class.

"So much the better." Doctor Grosse contorted his features into an expression of approval—no mean achievement. His face was seamed with several thick scars, long and red like earthworms. One of his eyes was artificial. It had a cold, glassy gleam; it was motionless and distrustful like a lizard behind a stone. His suit was cut of field-grey material. His broad chest bulged outward as though decked with invisible medals.

"I hate lifeless lecturing, I am telling you that right away."

His vivid manner of lecturing was like this:

"Today we are going to discuss parasitism in nature," he said, stationing himself in a corner whence his one good eye could easily survey the whole class. "In that respect the human world is just like nature. We are going through dark times, times of national degeneration, caused by a few countryless individuals who live like parasites on the body of our German nation."

He scanned us with a sharp look as though on a parade ground.

"There were no parasites among those of us who fought at Langemarck!" he continued, and in his excitement his real eye grew as fixed as his glass one. "There, at Langemarck, our brave young soldiers charged the enemy positions with a song on their lips and took them. With a song on their lips, my boys! German regiments against enemy machine-guns! Life was worth living then! Germany was alive then, a Germany worth dying for!"

He strode to the opposite corner. He seemed exalted, as though in a kind of trance. His scarred face was quivering.

"Is this noble, valiant Germany still alive?"

The head boy stood up. "No, Herr Doktor."

"Unfortunately not. That Germany is gone. Today we have parasites everywhere around us. It's a sickening sight! We have a republic, there's no doubt about that—a shit-republic, that's what we've got!"

Never before had a teacher used such a word! A real front-line soldier, this Doctor Grosse! Totally unlike the other teachers! Haha! "Shit-republic!" he said.

"Parasites, then, to return to our theme, exist both in nature and in human society. Just as parasitic plants prey on trees and suck the sap of these poor trees, until they die of inanition, innumerable parasites are now preying on the tree of Germany, sucking the last drops of strength from her veins. Got it?"

"Yes!" the class shouted.

"Journeyman saddlers, printers, carpenters, locksmiths, and other comrades are installed in government palaces. And a gentle-

man named Preuss—he calls himself Hugo, but his real name is probably Chaim . . .”

The class roared with delight.

“Quiet! So this Herr Preuss is sitting somewhere in Prussia—he won’t be there long—cooking up a constitution for himself and for us. . . .” Doctor Grosse pronounced these last words with a Yiddish accent, violently gesticulating. His scars contracted into a fierce grimace, his glass eye glittered motionless, his real eye rolled wildly from side to side as though uncomfortably imprisoned in its socket. The class roared and stamped its approval.

“I do not say,” continued Doctor Grosse, “I do not say as others do: Down with the Jews! Nor do I say that Herr Rabbi Walther Rathenau is a Jewish pig. . . !”

Laughter.

“Quiet! And so, I don’t say all that! Understand?”

“Yes! We do!”

“Fine. I am glad that we understand one another so perfectly. All I say is: just as they exist in nature, so parasites exist among us, and we must exterminate them! Radically! Without pity! Without sympathy! And if necessary, by violence!”

Here he stopped and stared at us, but it was evident that he didn’t see us. His good eye was gazing beyond us out through the window into the unknown. This was at the beginning of March 1920.

He then urged us, all of us, to join the *Jungsturm*. And with that, the botany lesson was over.

During recess, I approached Doctor Grosse.

“Well, what is it?” he inquired amiably.

“I am a member of the *Jungsturm*,” I said, and it made me feel uncomfortable.

“I am very glad to hear it, my boy,” he said, tapping me on the shoulder. “What’s on your mind?”

I plucked up all my courage, and said: “I am a Jew.”

"You are a Jew?" His face hardened. "Yes, go on."

"Because of the things you have said against us Jews," I said, and my voice didn't sound at all like my voice, "I want to resign from the *Jungsturm*."

"Yes, why don't you?" Doctor Grosse said with affected indifference.

After March 12, the three Jewish pupils were boycotted by the class. Nobody greeted us, nobody spoke to us, nobody answered our questions. We were non-existent.

Herr Hüsemann, our principal, began his daily round of inspection. Walking was hard for him. At every step his legs gave way under him, and he sagged forward. His nickname was Old Wobbly-Knee. More than forty years before, his pupils had called him Billygoat. From time to time he thought sadly of those good old days. Had he ever really had a frisky, gambolling step? He couldn't believe it himself, it was so long ago.

It was no accident that he was the head of our institution. He was a reliable official for whom nothing existed outside of his school. His school was his life. This was his philosophy: Whether a man is to succeed or fail in life is determined in my institution. Of all the schools in town, mine is the most important. Anyone who leaves my school with a good record has no worries ahead of him. A young man's school record is a true picture of his mind, because it accurately reflects his knowledge, abilities, ideas, hopes, ambitions, behaviour, and power of concentration. The pupils love their school, for only school gives meaning to the life of a growing young man. . . .

The war had not greatly shaken our principal or his views. Not even the loss of his only son could influence them. He was somewhat more affected by the collapse of the monarchy and the proclamation of the Republic. But not to the point of changing his views concerning his institution and his pupils. He tried to make the best of the new republican government, just as the new re-

publican government tried to make the best of him and other old monarchists like him.

As he hobbled along the corridors listening to the teachers' and pupils' voices behind the closed doors, he couldn't help thinking of the last teachers' meeting. He was painfully aware that politics had not respected the sanctity of his institution, but had invaded it, threatening to play a larger and larger role. What a time, what a terrible time for our poor fatherland! During his youth, when Bismarck was forging the German Reich, life was more hopeful, more beautiful, and the future held more promise; Germany's position in the world was secure. . . . Bismarck! The dark foreboding of his last years, his phrase: "I foresee no good future for Germany!"—all that had come true. The great chancellor's life-work was destroyed, the Reich lay crushed, it had lost the war although it had triumphed on the battlefields, there was more disunity among Germans than ever before. . . . Such were Hüsemann's thoughts, and they grieved him deeply. He sat down on a bench outside the school auditorium. Ah, even in the classrooms, among the pupils, even among the youngest, there was no end to discussions having nothing to do with school. And many a teacher was not without guilt in this state of affairs.

"Gentlemen!" he had finally exclaimed at the teachers' meeting. "Show some moderation, please! We are here to perform a necessary task for our nation. And our nation has always been just as it is today; it has not changed under any system of government; therefore our task still remains the same! Let us work for our nation even under the republic!"

"In my class there are three Jews," interjected Professor Opel. "These boys do not belong to the German nation. Nor do the sons of Red republican officials!"

"Please, please!" Doctor Voss jumped up in agitation. "You speak a language which may be found suitable in public meetings, but not in an educational institution!"

"I speak German, Herr Kollege," Professor Opel replied.

Doctor Grosse stood up. With a broad smile he explained: "To regard Jews as belonging to the German nation is repugnant to me, too. . . ."

"They were regarded as such in the trenches!" Doctor Voss protested.

Professor Opel did not take up that objection when it came his turn to speak. He smilingly admitted: "I can't bear the smell of Jewish boys. Jews and Negroes have a repulsive smell. Filthy races, that's what they are. Recently a couple of boys from my class came to see me and reported they had to boycott their three Jewish classmates, because these three Levantines had lice . . ."

"This is scandalous!" Doctor Voss banged his fist on the table.

". . . and they produced irrefutable proof of the fact!"

"The lice?" little Doctor Lummer inquired sarcastically.

And Urban, the aged German professor, bearded, near-sighted to the point of blindness, and a passionate believer in democracy, cried to Professor Opel, the French teacher: "*Quand on veut noyer un chien on dit qu'il est galeux!*"

Only with great effort had the principal succeeded in quieting the assembly. "Gentlemen! Gentlemen! Please, please!"

But he had been unable to prevent old Urban from crying to his colleague Opel: "The way you treat the Jewish boys in your class is a disgrace! Don't you realize what you are doing to these children's minds? Some will feel sub-human and some super-human for the rest of their lives! What will become of them in ten or twenty years?"

"Gentlemen!" exclaimed Hüsemann. "I respect the private opinions of each of you. But please do not forget that we have to maintain a tradition. When our pupils leave us, we want them to remember us with affection!"

"The three Jewish boys in Opel's class will remember us with bitterness and hatred," Professor Urban declared. "In the whole institution there are only seven Jews out of six hundred and

twenty-nine pupils. A teacher has no right to instil into young minds his private and personal hatreds!"

It drives one to despair, thought Hüseemann, wearily rising from his bench, all these arguments, all these endless quarrels. . . . One more year and I'll have reached the retirement age; then let some younger man try to cope with the new times. . . .

The Putsch

NOBODY knew exactly why the class hadn't started. Some boys claimed that during the night strange soldiers armed with cannon and machine-guns had arrived in the town. "It's revolution again, but this time against the Reds!" said the head boy of the class triumphantly.

"And against you Jews!" shouted Pudge, punching Benno Nadel in the face. Benno held his bleeding nose and, with his mouth wide open, blubbered:

"I won't let you copy any more!"

"You'll be killed anyway!" Pudge scoffed at him.

"All the Jews will be killed!" the class roared.

Then came the janitor, pale as chalk, and told us to hurry down to the playground. So something was really up! Downstairs we found the boys of the two upper grades dressed in windbreakers and soldiers' caps, acting like grown-ups and not at all like school-boys. Some were even smoking! Nothing like that had ever happened before!

Old Wobbly-Knee appeared, accompanied by a few teachers. Wobbly-Knee was in civilian clothes, but every teacher had some sort of uniform. Doctor Lummer, Professor Urban, and Doctor Voss were missing, but all the others were there. Professor Opel looked quite comical. He had on a new officer's tunic, but instead

of a soldier's cap he was wearing his crumpled old hunter's cap. Zunk was wearing a brand-new steel helmet! The only one who was properly turned out was Doctor Grosse in his colonel's uniform. At least ten medals hung on his chest!

All the teachers kept looking tensely at the clock, then back again at Wobbly-Knee. They kept speaking to him, but he seemed not to hear them well; he simply stood there holding his hand up to his ear, or tugging at his high collar, or nervously rubbing his knuckles. Finally he began to speak in a trembling voice, his old arms dangling uselessly from his sloping shoulders.

The hour had come, he said, the fatherland was awake again, and today our country was to be purged of the ignominy of the Republic. The upper grades had asked to be excused from class, he said, that they might do their duty along with their teachers, and he had granted their request with a proud though heavy heart. He exhorted us all, in this solemn hour, to do our duty with zeal and to conduct ourselves as Christians.

At that point his asthmatic old voice broke. Doctor Grosse cleared his throat with impatience.

"My boys!" Wobbly-Knee exclaimed in a plaintive voice. "My boys, go now, and God be with you!"

"Juniors and seniors, attention!" Doctor Grosse barked. "Both grades form ranks by the main gate! Forward, march!"

Zunk shouted: "Sophomores, to the gymnasium!"

We pricked up our ears. Were those shots that we heard?

"The lower grades will go home immediately," Wobbly-Knee whispered in a frightened, scarcely audible voice. "Don't stop anywhere on your way!"

We passed through tense, unfamiliar streets.

Everywhere proclamations had been posted.

The Kapp Putsch against the Republic had broken out!

About this same hour Franz Schaller returned to his lodgings in 21 Castle Street. Berta was pretty well frightened when he told her

not to be frightened, but things looked serious. He had stopped working an hour and a half ago, he told her, and had just come from a meeting of the carpenters' union. He was home only to change his clothes, and had to go on to another meeting immediately.

"I always knew it," he said with a curse as he slipped out of his overalls. "The Republic has been caught napping! In November 1918 the monarchists thought for a while that their necks were in danger, but nothing happened to them! The nobles remained nobles, the army men remained army men, the bourgeois remained bourgeois, nobody bothered them. What were we doing, the workers, the office-workers, the republicans? We kept wrangling among ourselves!" He was repeating almost word for word what he had just heard at the meeting. But Berta thought these ideas were his own, and she was proud of having such an intelligent husband. "We kept forming new groups, new parties, new oppositions, we split the groups, split the parties, split the oppositions, joined one day and resigned the next, intrigued, plotted—but against whom? Only against ourselves! . . . Give me a pair of clean socks, Berta. . . . And each party was sectarian, and fought all the other parties! And each opposition organized its own bureau, published its own newspaper, elected chairmen and secretaries, and at once created a new opposition within its own ranks! That was playing into our enemies' hands, all right! And now the reactionaries think one little push will overthrow the Republic! But they're badly mistaken, these fine gentlemen! . . . Hand me my cap. . . . Now I've got to go to the general meeting of all the union officials! Now, when it's almost too late, they're united again! And don't worry!"

"I'm not worried," said Berta. "But take your muffler, it's cold today."

Franz took his muffler.

"Is it really serious?"

"It might be. Albert Koch came back from Berlin this morning. Now we'll find out what's going on."

"How does it look in town?"

"We haven't forgotten what we learned in the war," Franz replied evasively. "They won't have it so easy."

And he went out.

The great general assembly was not held in the city hall, but in the public swimming pool. All the pool employees were union men. When they heard what was up, they let the water out of the pool and hung up a sign: "Closed for repairs."

The officials stood in the empty pool or sat on benches around the edge. The diving tower was occupied by the leaders of the unions and the Left parties. No workers' group was missing: metal workers, wood workers, textile workers, transport workers, all were represented. Editor Koch reported on his trip to Berlin. He had brought back a proclamation against the putschists.

"We have no time to lose," he said.

"Louder!" cried a few men sitting on the stairs, from which you could see into the women's showers.

But precisely because the situation was so critical, said Albert Koch, he refused to speak louder.

"Right!" cried those who stood in front of him.

"Now I am going to read the Berlin proclamation," said Koch. "This will save us a lot of talking, and everybody will see what it's all about."

"We are putting the motion to vote," the zealous chairman declared. "Who is for reading the proclamation?"

There was some opposition.

"Carried against a small minority," announced the chairman.

"No! We are not against reading the proclamation!" the few oppositionists protested. "We were only against the unnecessary vote!"

"So much the better," declared the chairman. "Carried unanimously, then. Now start reading, Albert."

"Workers! Comrades! The army putsch has broken out!" Koch

read. "Ehrhardt's navy division is marching on Berlin to force a change in the government of the Reich. We refuse to submit to this military violence. We say: No, a hundred times no! Workers! With every means at your disposal foil this attempt of the bloody reactionaries to return to power! Strike! Down tools! Nip the military dictatorship in the bud! Fight with every weapon for the preservation of the Republic, put all splits aside! There is only one way of preventing Wilhelm's return: the paralysis of all economic life! Not a single finger must be lifted, not a single proletarian shall help the military dictatorship. General strike everywhere! Proletarians, unite!"

There was deep silence in the swimming pool. Koch sat down on the springboard. The board squeaked, and to all those assembled the squeaking was an insolent provocation.

After a moment the applause began, but the chairman quickly suppressed it. "Let us waste no time today," he said with a gesture of authority. "Comrades, now we must vote—for or against the general strike. What do you prefer: ballots or show of hands?"

"Show of hands!" somebody cried.

"Then let everybody who is for the general strike raise his hand."

Almost all did.

"Against?"

Not a hand was raised.

"The motion is carried unanimously. Now we shall proceed to the organization of the defence. . . ."

This was exactly what happened at that memorable meeting.

And that meeting in the swimming pool lasted for a long, long time.

Yes, there was nothing to do about it, the meeting was still on. Five more speakers, each representing an important group, took the floor, one after another.

"Comrades, the serious situation . . ." said the first.

"Comrades, the critical situation . . ." said the second.

"Comrades, this historical and serious situation . . ." said the third.

"Comrades, the seriousness of this hour . . ." said the fourth.

"Comrades, the historical seriousness of this historical situation . . ." said the fifth.

Then a sixth speaker took the floor.

"Comrades, I cannot sufficiently stress the historically critical seriousness of this unequivocally critical historical situation," he said with emotion.

The meeting in the swimming pool lasted three hours. In the meantime soldiers and quickly formed civilian patrols occupied the city hall, the railroad station, the schools, the hospital, and a few of the public gymnasiums. They did not forget the swimming pool. Eight soldiers read the sign: "Closed for repairs," and marched away.

Wherever you went, there were soldiers marching. They were well armed. They came in armoured cars with huge skulls painted on them, and it was apparent that these armoured cars had travelled through the night over muddy roads. The townspeople stood silently on the sidewalks, and watched the troops march past. These soldiers were rebels; they had come to take over the government of our town. What did it all mean? They meant to arrest the republicans—husbands, wives, fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters—they intended to load their prisoners on trucks, take them through the woods to the river, and none of the prisoners would ever be heard of again. . . . Many people in the town knew what that putsch meant. In every town in Germany rebels were marching through the streets. Many men and women, many families were in mortal danger. . . .

But the public reaction to these dangers was mild. They had recently lived through a war; they were quite professional in their comments. Sixteen months ago the war had still been going on—how quickly time passes! And yet there were still people who en-

joyed war, who had never wearied of it during the four long years before 1918! It was unbelievable!

Arthur Schubert stood with his sad little wife at the corner of Castle Street. He explained everything to her.

"See, this is a heavy machine-gun," he said proudly. "And that one there is a light machine-gun. . . ."

"Horrible," said his wife. Suddenly she felt cold.

"I know all about these things," Schubert boasted. His voice was as happy as though he had met a long lost friend. "I could handle that mine-thrower myself." He really was happy, he was as happy as a child.

His wife looked at him in silence, her face even sadder than usual.

"Why should they bring mine-throwers into our town?" she sighed.

The Stiefels, too, stood at the street corner watching the troops. Their divorced daughter was enthusiastic.

"How well they march!" she exclaimed. "Ah, real soldiers again!"

"And they've brought barbed wire, too!" Frau Stiefel smiled contentedly. "Look, Emanuel! What are they going to do with the barbed wire?"

"Hey, you over there! What's the barbed wire for, comrades!" shouted Herr Stiefel, the passionate rabbit-breeder, to the marching soldiers, waving his umbrella to attract their attention. But the soldiers made no reply.

"Stuck-ups!" Herr Stiefel muttered, chagrined.

"Oh, leave them alone, Daddy," his daughter comforted him. "Aren't they cunning! Aren't they sweet!"

"Stupid goose!" growled the midwife, who was standing next to the Stiefels.

It was drizzling—real March weather. It drizzled all day long. And everywhere there were soldiers. The soldiers who had arrived

during the night were Bavarians, but many of our own townsmen were also in uniform, schoolteachers and young men from the middle-class families, all of them energetic, forbidding, heavily armed. People watched them in amazement as they patrolled the streets with guns and helmets, and hand grenades hanging from their belts, exactly as in wartime. Trucks circulated slowly through the town, to the barracks, then back again, in a systematic attempt to intimidate the population. The faces were resolute under the heavy steel helmets, the arms ready for action, but there was no shooting—for there was no opposition!

The streets, though, became more and more crowded. It was hard to move along.

The soldiers strung barbed wire in front of the city hall, while the crowd looked on from a suitable distance. Some remarked that they had seen these things done better during the war. These young Bavarian soldiers must be mere beginners! Our old soldiers laughed at them—our old soldiers who had become civilians again only sixteen months before.

Behind the barbed wire stood a whole row of machine-guns, and behind the machine-guns stood the soldiers waiting for something to happen. But for a long time nothing happened, nothing at all.

"Let them wait a little," Franz Schaller said to his wife. "We'll wait too. We'll wait a day. Let them feel they're safe, the babies!" And then he had to say good-bye to her, for that night he was not going to sleep at 21 Castle Street.

The day drew to its close, and still nothing happened. Still no shot was fired. The Bavarian soldiers and their officers and our own schoolteachers and respectable citizens' sons were half proud because everything was going so well, and half uneasy because everything was going so marvellously well. The town, they thought, the town is already conquered, it's already ours, isn't it uncanny? . . .

But Franz Schaller said: "Make haste slowly. For the moment we have decided not to work tomorrow. Nowhere. Tomorrow no factory will operate, there will be no water, no streetcars, no light,

no gas, no trains, no bread. And then we'll see what happens. But now I've got to go."

"Don't catch cold," Berta said. "The weather's so bad. And don't let them find you. Remember the town's under martial law."

"I'll be careful," Franz promised. "You see, I'm taking my muffler."

"That makes me feel much better," said Berta, kissing him.

But when he was gone she couldn't help crying.

The night after the Kapp government had been proclaimed in Berlin without encountering any resistance, Ziegler of our senior class and Hinkel of our junior class, accompanied by four young Bavarian soldiers, were guarding the railroad station of our small town in Central Germany. Ziegler and Hinkel had never mounted guard before. They hadn't ever fired a real 98 army rifle, or handled a heavy service revolver, or thrown real hand grenades. But for the last hour they had been pacing the six regulation steps up and down, arms shouldered, in dead earnest. Their white armbands said: CIVILIAN DEFENCE.

It was pitch-dark in the street, and in the vast station only one small lamp was burning. For the last half-hour the four Bavarian soldiers, divided into pairs, had been off on a scouting expedition. At first, the two students were mighty proud at the confidence placed in them by the soldiers who had left them alone, but gradually they grew uneasy. Suppose something happened, and here they were, quite alone! Both scouting parties had promised to be back in ten minutes! each of the two thought. But each kept his thought to himself, for they were both ashamed to admit their uneasiness.

"Comrade," whispered Ziegler, "I'm going to take a leak!"

He was to pay dearly for this unsoldierly act!

He moved off toward the unlit cubicle on which, during the day, one could read the inscription: MEN.

Two minutes passed, and still Ziegler did not return.

Three minutes . . . and still no Ziegler!

Hinkel waited and waited, his anxiety increasing by the moment. Once again he took his six steps forward and six steps back, but then he halted, listening. He had heard something, but maybe he was mistaken. . . . It's damn dark, tonight, and there's something wrong here, I must take a look and find out what Comrade Ziegler is doing, thought Hinkel, and for sheer nervousness he forgot that he was mounting guard and that a sentry must never leave his post.

And then, for a long moment, there was deep silence on the huge square before the station, whose outlines could only be guessed at in the darkness. Nothing had happened, yet both sentries had vanished as if swallowed by the earth; they did not come back. The little lamp burned on alone in the vast space.

Only one ticket window was open. Behind it sat August Heider, Frau Wunder's roomer, dozing. All of a sudden he awoke with a start. There were men at his window. Workers, by God! In the middle of the night!

"What do you want?" he whispered.

"Don't shout," said one of the men, who was wearing nickel-framed glasses. "Open the door to the platform, quick!"

"Please! I have no right to do that," the employee protested, frightened at the thought of losing his job and his future pension—he was fifty-nine years old, almost at the age limit.

"Ssh! Quiet!" said the man with the glasses, producing a revolver. "Open it up!"

"I'll do it only if you buy platform tickets," Herr Heider whispered, still frightened, but resolute. "I'm an official, I have no right to let you through without a ticket. If the inspector found out, I'd lose my job!"

The armed man seemed to agree. His name was Alfred Richter, and he was treasurer of the textile union. This Heider, too, was a treasurer of a sort. The cash register must be in order! He put the

revolver in his pocket and drew out his purse. "There are fifteen of us. How much is it?"

"Three marks, please."

"I have only two marks. Give us ten tickets and open the gate, quick. The other five will stay here."

He was given his ten tickets. August Heider locked his booth and came out with the key and punch.

"The other gentlemen must remain here, I am sorry," he apologized in a whisper. Then he punched the tickets and let the ten men out onto the dark platform.

Suddenly he turned to the remaining group. "What are they doing on the platform at this hour? There are no trains due, now that I think of it!" He stared miserably at the gate—at last he was fully awake.

"N-no, there's no train coming now, and there'll be no trains tomorrow—no trains at all until the putsch is licked, my good man. The men outside are blocking all the signals so no train can pass."

"My God!" cried August Heider. "Where are the soldiers?"

"Shut up, you fool! Don't get excited!"

The ten men came back. "It's all done," said Richter. They handed back the platform tickets to Heider, who was almost dead with fright. "And not a word about this"—they smiled at him encouragingly—"or you'll be held responsible."

A small group of workers stood in front of the station. They were carrying bundles and oblong packages. The bundles and packages contained soldiers' coats and guns.

At five in the morning a cold rain had still been falling, but now it was clear, and early spring was in the air. The factories were closed. No workers reported at their jobs. But they didn't stay home. They went out for a walk. In the town, not in the woods. On the sidewalks, five, six, up to ten in a row. Wherever the sidewalk was too narrow, they walked in the street. Little by little all

the sidewalks in town became too narrow. Today the workers seemed to have an amazing amount of time for strolling. Apparently no meals were even being cooked. The workers' wives were out strolling too.

Soldiers and young boys in uniform were busy sticking posters on the walls of all municipal buildings. The promenaders halted before them; they kept their hands in their pockets and read. Having plenty of time, they read slowly, very slowly. They read without talking, without smiling, without changing their expressions.

They read that six soldiers who had been guarding the railroad station had been attacked at night by a cowardly band of aliens, that they had been tied, gagged, and robbed of their arms. Anyone revealing the identity of the culprit or culprits would receive a reward of a thousand marks. Moreover, the informer's name would be kept secret.

On another poster they read, without batting an eyelash, that strikes were prohibited. They read: "Death sentences will be meted out to the ring-leaders, to those guilty of actions punishable according to the decree for the preservation of labour peace, and also to strike pickets."

The strikers read these bold threats, slowly, word by word. Only two years before they had been lying in the trenches; that hadn't been any fun, and now, they thought, nobody was going to talk so big and get away with it. . . . But none of them said a word; they only shrugged their shoulders from time to time. Soon hundreds of workers were standing in front of the glaring posters.

Suddenly a cry resounded:

"Look! A Zeppelin's flying over!"

At once all stared at the sky and shouted:

"Where? Where? Show me where, Emil?"

And nobody saw the Zeppelin, although they all tried very hard and many shouted wildly: "There, there! The long line there! No, further to the right! Hurray!"

And after they had shouted their fill and stared at the sky, they

returned to the posters. But who can describe their indescribable amazement? Not I. The posters were no longer there, they were stripped off, good and clean; only spots of paste could be seen on the walls!

"Ze-zebbelin fled away!" somebody shouted, imitating a child's voice.

"Well, let's go on, Eulalia," one worker said to his wife, who probably was not his wife at all, and whose name probably was not Eulalia.

"Yeah, let's go on," they all said. "Let's go to the marketplace."

At the marketplace, around the equestrian statues of Herman and Jutta, the throng of promenaders grew constantly thicker. At first the outermost fringes of the crowd had kept a good thirty yards between themselves and the barbed wire, but a long time, more than an hour, had passed since then. Now at least two thousand workers and their wives were crowding the square, and between them and the barbed wire there was a free space of perhaps twenty inches, no more!

Behind the barbed wire, the soldiers from out of town waited with their machine-guns. They were hot, these young soldiers, although it was only March. And they didn't know for sure how they should act. To shoot at fellow-countrymen from Central Germany wasn't so simple. Their colonel, Doctor Grosse, who was from our town, had just ordered them to stand ready. They were forty soldiers, and facing them were thousands of citizens. How could the forty be sure that the thousands had no arms somewhere in their midst? . . .

The Bavarians sat behind their machine-guns ready for action. But they were not at ease, anybody could see that.

Then one man went close to the barbed wire. Everyone in the town knew him, everyone knew his white flowing mane. He was Albert Koch, editor of the *Volkszeitung*. Koch was a relatively young man. His white crown was a great asset to him and his party

in these revolutionary times. The workers liked him, they spoke of him as "our Albert," he seemed to them wise, resolute, energetic—this editor who had once been a blacksmith. He was a self-made man. He was a living example of the fulfilment of the socialist dream in which they all believed. There was a halo around him wherever he went.

When he thus unexpectedly came forward from among the immense crowd and uncovered his head, letting his hair, his beautiful white hair, blow in the wind, the workers burst into cheers. With a gesture betraying the experienced popular orator, he restored calm.

"Since yesterday the putschists have been looking for me!" he announced in his familiar resounding voice. "Well! You're looking for me? Here I am!" He favoured short, theatrical phrases.

Somebody in the crowd shouted shrilly: "You tell them, Albert!"

"Don't you know yet that the white flag has been hoisted over the barracks?" Koch asked the soldiers. "The garrison has come over to our side! They have fraternized with us! What are you waiting for?"

The colonel on the other side of the barbed wire was the first to regain his self-possession. "I'll give the order to shoot!" he cried.

"I laugh at death!" cried Koch in reply.

"I'll count three! If at that moment your comrades haven't moved back five yards, I will give the command, Koch!" cried Colonel Grosse. "One!"

"Soldiers! Don't shoot at workers! Don't shoot at your brothers!" cried Koch. "If you surrender, I will let you go free, Grosse! Be reasonable. . . ."

"Two!"

The crowd began to sing. A wild song! Composed of many songs that arose suddenly and simultaneously at many points in the throng. A deafening song! And a deafening yell! In front, near the barbed wire, men were getting their wire-cutters ready. . . .

Three!

The colonel gave a sign!

Raised his revolver. . . .

Shots rang out. Bullets whistled. Men threw themselves on the ground. Women shrieked. Suddenly there were answering shots from the roof-tops. Bullets spattered against buildings, shattered windowpanes. Fragments fell on the crowd, on the paving stones. There was shouting, blood, a wild *mêlée*. The whole thing lasted less than a minute. . . .

Then a great quiet descended upon the marketplace, a deathly quiet which was only emphasized by a single gasp. A deep panting gasp. Slowly looking about them, men rose from the ground. Remembering their war years, many of the men had thrown themselves on the ground at the sound of the first shots. It was not these men who now began to howl with fury or shout with joy, who now began to laugh, or cry, or yell, or sob, or cheer—these men remained calm. They behaved exactly as though they were old soldiers sent on leave an hour before. Only the women made a fuss. And the wounded.

Twenty-six people were killed. Of these, five were putschists.

More than a hundred were injured, among them, Colonel Grosse and editor Koch. Grosse had a bullet wound in his shoulder; he was already bandaged and was being taken away. Koch was merely grazed.

"The noise has stopped at last," said Herr Haskel Weiss in Castle Street with a sigh of relief. "Poor fools! They've probably all killed each other."

"Keep away from the window!" Frau Dvora Weiss cried to us. "It may not be over yet!"

We Fishmans were in the Weisses' apartment. Father had come back from the road the morning before. "This is no time for travelling," he said. "A Jew shouldn't even go out in the street." This was addressed chiefly to me, for he knew I would have been glad to go out in the street. But Father said: "If they see a Jew, they'll say

afterwards that the Jews started the putsch." So all of us Jews from 21 Castle Street were huddled together.

Suddenly Herr Weiss said: "Someone's knocking at the door!"

"I'll see who it is," I said, for none of the grown-ups had made a move.

But Frau Weiss was frightened; she told me not to.

"I didn't hear anything," Father said softly.

Then there was another knock, and a desperate voice cried desperately:

"Open the door! Open the door!"

When I opened, it was not a soldier but Herr Feivel!

"Where have you been? I thought you were deported!" Father put his hands to his head in bewilderment. "We thought you went to Antwerp a long time ago."

"I went as far as the frontier," Herr Feivel sighed, dropping wearily on the sofa. "But they wouldn't let me in. I just got back. There's really no reason to go on living, my dear friends. I'll really die soon."

"Stop making jokes! How did you get here? There are no trains, are there? There's a general strike on! How did you do it?"

"You couldn't have done what I did," Herr Feivel replied evasively, and refused to reveal anything.

That day, while many people in the town were being killed or wounded this Feivel sat in the home of Weiss, the Eastern Jew. He was neither a putschist, nor a republican, nor a soldier, nor a worker. He was a Jewish refugee from the Ukraine who had sought asylum in the young German Republic, but had not found it. "I was deported by the republican police. What's going on down there is none of my business," he said, pointing at the street. "Whatever happens, I am lost. No matter who wins today, the police will be the police. And the government? Tell me, have I ever personally had anything to do with a government?"

His mood was bitter. And yet, he said suddenly—and it sounded like a confession of unrequited love:

"How I would love to stay here, though . . . ah!"

Everybody was startled by this unexpected exclamation. And everybody tried to make him feel differently. Frau Weiss, speaking soothingly, as to a sick man, remarked: "If I were you, I wouldn't like to stay in a country that's going through a revolution like this."

Herr Weiss, too, was persuasive. "But this is just one of your ideas, Herr Feivel," he said. "Listening to you, anybody would think Germany was a paradise."

But nothing helped. In the Ukraine, Herr Feivel boasted, he had become accustomed to shootings, beatings, insurrections. But while here, in Germany, he was an onlooker, in the Ukraine he would have been a participant—that is, in the Ukraine no sort of upheaval could have occurred without somebody or other hunting Feivel. Compared to the conditions prevailing in his native land, he assured us with candour, this insurrection here—at least so far as he was concerned—was a nice little affair. "I can sit here peacefully, in Castle Street, and sip my coffee. Do you think I could afford to do that in the Ukraine? And this should be the one place where I'm not allowed to stay! A calamity!"

"Another of Feivel's crazy ideas!" Herr Weiss laughed.

He did have his ideas, this Feivel. For example, he maintained that he would never have been deported if the German Jews had stood up for him. Really, why didn't they do something for a fellow-Jew like him? Shouldn't one Jew help another? "No, Herr Fishman, no one helped me," he said bitterly. "How can you say that anybody helped me? Who helped me? Say right away who helped me. Give me some names." And then he bent over the table and told us all how he could be helped: "A German Jew only has to go to the police and say: Good morning, I am not a foreigner, I am a German Jew, please speak to me calmly and decently. My German is exactly as good as yours, Herr Chief of Police. And this gentleman here is Herr Feivel, a respectable Jew like me. And now, permit me one question: Why do you persecute my good friend

Feivel? Do me a personal favour and let him stay here! What harm can it do you if he lives here? And what do you need his birth certificate for? Couldn't you give him a residence permit, please, as an exception, maybe, even if he has no birth certificate, dear Herr Chief of Police? . . . That's how I could be helped!"

Everybody in the room laughed at Herr Feivel's fantasies. But he didn't see what was so funny about it. "The next time a German Jew comes to see you, speak to him about me and my birth certificate. Maybe he'll consent to help me."

At this the laughter was redoubled. "A German Jew coming to see us? A German coming to see an Eastern Jew? Do you know what you're saying, Feivel?"

"Then speak to some German Jew in the synagogue," begged Feivel. "If you don't do this for me, there's nothing left for me to do but go straight out into the street, stand in front of a gun, and say: Shoot, Mr. Soldier. . . . Then nobody will be able to deport me!"

"Herr Feivel," said Herr Weiss, pacing nervously up and down the room. (Three hours later the poor man will be lying on an operating table, and never again will he be able to pace up and down like this.) "Herr Feivel, I am sorry to have to tell you this, but a week ago we Eastern Jews broke off all connexion with the German synagogue."

As though by magic, Herr Feivel forgot all his worries! He no longer thought of going out to be shot—at least he wanted first to know why the Eastern Jews of this town no longer went to the German synagogue! And whether they had their own *schul*. And where this *schul* was situated. In short, he wanted to know everything, like a man firmly resolved to remain where he was for a long time to come!

It was the organ music that had started all the trouble, he learned.

"That's what I said right away, the first time I came here,"

Feivel said triumphantly. "What kind of a Jewish service is that, I said the very first day, with organ music? At home . . ."

"And on *Shabbes*, what's more!" said Herr Weiss, "when it's forbidden to play any instrument at all!"

"Even a Gentile organist can't play in a Jewish temple on *Shabbes*." Father shook his head disapprovingly. "It says in the Scriptures . . ."

"But that's not all," Frau Weiss added. "Then there was the business with the seats! They wanted everybody to rent a seat! And if you wouldn't rent a seat, you were refused admission to the temple of your God! Herr Feivel, just imagine that—renting seats!"

"Like in the theatre!" Herr Weiss laughed ironically. "If only they had been fair! But not at all! The first row was reserved for the Herr doctors and big businessmen! And we poor Eastern Jews were given seats in the very last row! Just ask Herr Fishman where his seat was!" he advised Herr Feivel, who was listening as though in a trance.

"What difference does it make where I had my seat?" Father tried to evade the question.

"Please tell him," Frau Weiss begged. "Don't you see how this talk is helping poor Feivel?"

"Well, if you think so." Father yielded. "My seat was in a corner."

"You forget the post," Frau Weiss said, chuckling.

"All right," sighed Father. "In a corner, beside a post."

"*Behind* a post," Herr Weiss corrected him.

"Behind half a post," Father stammered.

Feivel laughed like a madman.

"And so now we have our own *schul*," Herr Weiss went on. "It's no palace, but we're quite satisfied. A hotel went bankrupt and we've rented the bowling alley. Grünfeld, a rich Eastern Jew, gave us a *torah*. You'll see it this afternoon."

"This afternoon? I wouldn't even dream of it," Herr Feivel rejected the invitation. "Of all days, must it be today?"

"It will soon be time for evening prayers," Haskel Weiss said, shifting uneasily from one foot to the other. (He still had both his feet.)

"Should we really go? Maybe the shooting isn't over? Maybe it's still dangerous in the streets?" Yossel Fishman objected.

"It's perfectly quiet in the streets," Herr Weiss assured him. "I must go. This is an anniversary for me, and I must recite *Kaddish*," insisted Haskel Weiss. "Do you want to have a look at our *schul*, Herr Feivel?"

Herr Feivel had stretched out on the sofa, and was taking a rest. Under no circumstances did he want to leave Herr Weiss's apartment today. "Will you give me a guarantee that I won't be shot? Did I run away from the Ukraine to be shot here?"

Herr Weiss and Herr Fishman went alone. On the way they met several workers with red armbands and guns. Trucks full of singing men rattled around the corner with a threatening roar. Other cars, decked out with red cloth, were waiting. What were they waiting for?

Yossel Fishman would have liked to know what these cars were waiting for.

"How do I know what they are waiting for?" Haskel Weiss answered.

That morning there had been putschists everywhere, but now they had vanished. That, Fishman and Weiss told each other, made it look as though the Reds had won. ("I imagine so, Fishman, but I wouldn't swear to it.") They were neither happy nor unhappy about it. They merely stated their impressions. ("Well, we may be mistaken, of course. Maybe the putschists have disguised themselves as workers. Where I come from . . .") Most likely it was still impossible to know the final outcome, they thought, but it might be a good thing if the Reds did win—on the other hand it

might be very bad. How can a poor Jew tell what's good and what's bad? Maybe the Reds aren't red at all, maybe they're too red. We must wait and see what they do to us. Our life as Jews isn't so easy. A Jew never knows who's going to turn against him. . . . All that is what the two men of 21 Castle Street were thinking, and, to be on the safe side, they decided to avoid the principal thoroughfares.

But the side streets were not quiet, either. Whenever a Red guard appeared, the two hurrying Jews became badly frightened. It is true that they had nothing on their consciences, nothing at all. But they had no arms, and the guards *had* arms, definitely and positively; their arms could even be seen! And possibly there were crazy guards, surely there were some crazy ones among so many guards. It was quite possible ("Why not?") that they would have no luck and get in the way of a crazy guard, and what then?

"We're lucky we don't have to join, as we did in the war," Herr Fishman comforted himself by thinking, despite his uneasiness.

"Russian Jews fought in the war against Japan, I mean the war of about twenty years ago. And how did the Tsar thank us?" Haskel Weiss asked, and he answered himself: "He made pogroms, out of gratitude. Why meddle in things if you don't have to?"

"I never meddle," Yossel Fishman assured him. "But will the others refrain from meddling with me?"

Just as he was saying this, a voice cried:

"Halt!"

Five armed workers blocked the path of the two terrified Eastern Jews.

"Where are you going?"

"A thousand pardons!" cried Haskel Weiss, the first to recover himself. "We aren't afraid, gentlemen!" he cried. "We are going to say our evening prayers. Today is an anniversary for me, gentlemen."

"That's the only reason we're out," Herr Fishman explained.

"Otherwise we would have stayed home this afternoon, because we don't think it's any business of ours meddling in the putsch! But we've come out because he has to recite *Kaddish*. Maybe you know, gentlemen, that a Jew must recite a certain prayer on the anniversary of his parents' death. This prayer is called *Kaddish*."

"Have you any papers to prove your identity?" one of the workers asked, and whispered something into his comrade's ear.

"I have no papers. My name is Fishman, you may believe me. If I had known that papers were needed, I would have brought them. I have hundreds of documents at home, as many as you want. I just had new business cards printed! And I am positive my name is Fishman, my word of honour! Why shouldn't my name be Fishman, I am asking you, why not?"

"And what's your name?"

"Haskel Weiss, my word of honour! But why get excited, gentlemen? We are simple people, please let us go to our prayers!"

"To what party do you belong?"

"What do you mean, party?" Herr Fishman inquired, turning pale with fright.

"I'm in the drygoods business—bed-linen, table-linen, and underwear," moaned Haskel Weiss. "Am I a politician? No, I'm not a politician! We really have nothing against you! What do you want from us?"

"Are you carrying firearms?"

"How can you imagine such a thing!" Herr Fishman was almost choking with fright. "Do you think we're robbers? Or that we're fighting a war? So what should we need arms for?"

They were searched and allowed to proceed.

"They almost shot us on the spot!" exclaimed Herr Fishman. "Today of all days you have to go out!"

"Did I make you come with me, Reb Fishman?"

"Make me? Would I let you make me, Reb Weiss?"

At last they stood in front of the Golden Sun, the hotel that had recently gone bankrupt.

"Well, at last we're here!" both men exclaimed.

At that very moment a salvo of frightful explosions came from the other side of the gate.

"I'm hit!" cried Herr Weiss. He fell and lay motionless.

And from the other side of the gate the explosions went merrily on. . . .

The huge dining room of the former Golden Sun had been remodelled by a certain Herr Schmutzler into an auto repair shop. This Herr Schmutzler, like other non-political persons, did not bother about the historical day, nor did the historical day bother about him. And so he was able to work on a motorcycle in his shop. All day long the motorcycle had refused to start. Just now it had suddenly begun to work, laboriously and irregularly it is true, but it worked. It backfired like a string of hand grenades, it roared, it stank, and finally the motor seemed to be turning over. But then Herr Schmutzler had to stop it, for in came one of those Eastern Jews who, a week ago, had rented the bowling alley of the hotel and turned it into a temple. Every day Schmutzler the mechanic, to satisfy his curiosity, had furtively sneaked up to the half-covered windows and peeped in. He had seen the Jews praying noisily to their God in the "temple." It looked very mysterious when out of a little velvet box they pulled two black cubes with long leather straps and then tied one of the cubes on the left arm under the tucked-up shirt-sleeve and the other cube on their forehead between the eyes. Sometimes they even threw white cloaks over their shoulders, or even pulled these cloaks over their heads! Like Arabs in the Sahara Desert, Herr Schmutzler thought romantically. In his youth, before the war, he had often dreamed of emigrating to East Africa. . . . For two hours the Jews would stand inside; they would never open a window; they shook and cried and lamented all at once. When did they work? Herr Schmutzler wondered. They never stopped praying—morning, afternoon, evening. . . . He did not know whether so many prayers merely surprised him or annoyed him. Did he find these Eastern Jews re-

pulsive or impressive? He didn't know. At any rate, it was a pity that none of them owned a car or a motorcycle. All of them were poor wretches, small tradesmen, pedlars, tailors, shoemakers—that much he had learned during this week. For every one of them had already offered to sell him something: handkerchiefs, socks, underwear, a dress for his wife, a suit, a pair of shoes. . . . Funny fellows, anyway; he couldn't make head or tail of them. Here was one of them come to see him. Probably he had socks to sell. No? Something had happened? There had been shooting outside? And a man was lying wounded in the street and his help was needed?

Of course he helped. He offered to take the wounded man to the hospital. It gave him an excuse to test the motorcycle he had just repaired. The wounded man was put into the side-car and lost consciousness when Herr Schmutzler tried a little too abruptly to stand him on his feet. And the other Jew, the one who had come to ask his assistance and protested again and again that he had never taken a ride on a motorcycle, had to sit behind him on the seat. In this fashion, they arrived at the hospital.

There it was established that Herr Haskel Weiss, who had meanwhile regained consciousness and was groaning, had suffered no gun wound, in spite of his oaths and the perfectly credible account of his companion, Herr Yossel Fishman. The patient was suffering, however, from a compound fracture of the leg, apparently caused by a clumsy fall. His left leg would have to be amputated.

"But there were shots!" Yossel Fishman said excitedly. "I heard them myself!"

"How can you say there were no shots!" poor Haskel Weiss protested, groaning and offended, as they were taking him to the operating room. "How can you say I haven't a bullet in my leg? What am I saying—a bullet? A hundred bullets!"

Book 3

MEN AND FOREIGN
EXCHANGE

In a German Grove

THE square was in the eastern part of the town and was called the "little grove," though there was nothing grove-like about it. There were only a few bushes, a few benches freshly painted green every spring, and three sandboxes for children.

Every morning the 'humbler people of the town came here "to see the square." They walked around the square, complaining to their neighbours or fellow-workers, who that day were also there. The Eastern Jews of the neighbourhood also gathered there 'to have a little look, to hear what's going on." Or they exchanged bits of news received from "home," their "städtels" in the East. They could never forget their native land—Eastern Europe—and their habit of telling and listening to stories was as alive as ever. Unfortunately their children had no interest whatever in the East. They too came to the little grove, but only to play German games. These Eastern Jews had a hard time with their children, who wouldn't even answer when their parents called them by their Jewish names of Yankele, Davtche, Gittele, or Hannakin. The parents could "shout their heads off" as they said, but the children answered only when called by their German names. And when the parents asked them: "What game are you playing? *Ganovim und zellner*?" the children answered angrily: "No! We're playing cops and robbers!" though both meant the same thing.

And this went on evening after evening. . . .

Long, long after everyone else, even the lovers, had gone home, the Eastern Jews used to stay there. The moon itself had probably gone home—at any rate it was pitch-dark, but still the Jews were

there. It was so nice and warm—why go home? Go to bed, so early? There's always time for sleeping! Tomorrow is another day! It's so nice being together, Jews among Jews, nobody but Jews in the whole little grove, why go home? . . . And the children didn't go home, either. What would they do at home, all by themselves? Let them stay, let them sit down awhile. . . . And they sat down, the children of the alien Jews in this German town. They were tired now, and to tell the truth they weren't a bit interested in what was being said, but they listened, almost as in a dream they listened to their mothers and fathers and aunts and uncles and the *shochet* S. Klein and this one and that one telling about distant lands and strange people. . . .

Every evening, without ever getting tired, the grown-ups told stories about "at home in the old country." There was no end to the stories. There were always new ones. The supply was inexhaustible. The children were half asleep. "At home . . ." they thought wearily. "Why, that's right here in town."

One had a brother in France, another had a nephew in England. Still another had a sister and a daughter and an uncle in South Africa. And everybody had someone in Palestine. And in Belgium. And in Holland. . . . And they had all lived at one time or another in Lithuania or South Russia or Poland or Rumania. . . . That was what the weary children heard. And they thought wearily: There are so many countries in the world, real countries, not just coloured spots on the map. And we live in Germany. . . .

One day they heard that Itchku Reiss was a regular *goy*, really a regular *goy*!

"What do you mean? Itchku Reiss a *goy*?" said Frau Klein incredulously.

"He said he was unhappy without his own piece of land. He must have a garden, he said, because he is used to digging, he was a farmer in Lithuania."

"A farmer! I never knew that Itchku Reiss was a farmer!"

"Of course not! He probably never knew it himself!"

"What does Itchku Reiss know, anyway?"

"And now he has rented a garden plot!"

"You don't say! That's a good one!"

"Honest to God! He's even begun to dig it already! Every night and every Sunday he digs his garden. He's bought all sorts of tools—a spade, a hoe, and whatever else you need to dig with."

"Just between you and me, what for does he dig in his garden?"

"For his pleasure, Madam!"

"Nebbich!"

"He even has his own tomatoes already. His wife says Itchku's tomatoes are three times as big as tomatoes from the grocer. Itchku's in love with his tomatoes! More than with his wife, his wife says!"

They all roared with laughter.

What's so funny about it? the weary children thought. If we had a little garden too, it would be very nice. The Müllers and the Schulzes and the Schmidts and many other boys in our class—they all have a garden. Only we have none. It wouldn't be funny at all if we had a garden, and every member of the family had his own patch. One could plant cabbages, and another radishes, and another turnips, and all around there would be flowers. . . . But we have no garden. It's too bad. And they even make fun of Herr Reiss because he has one. . . .

"Daddy, we'd like a little garden too!"

"I have nothing else to worry about! I'm glad I make enough to eat on, and now you want a garden! Are you crazy? Am I a rich man?"

"But the Müllers aren't rich, either, Daddy."

"The Müllers are German. Does Herr Müller go around peddling with a little pack, from village to village, from house to house? Herr Müller gets his money every week, he doesn't have to run after money. Money runs after him. To buy a garden you have to be a very rich man!"

"Even a very small garden, Daddy?"

"Leave me alone, you with your garden! A Jewish boy has other ideas in his head, he doesn't think about gardens. You're turning into real *goyim*! You want to play soccer, you want pocket money, you want to go to the movies, you want to buy books—and now you want a garden! I never heard the like of it! Did I play soccer when I was little? Did I ask for pocket money? Did I go to the movies? Was I allowed to buy books?" The harassed father would shake his head angrily. "I was sent to the *cheder*! Day and night, to the *cheder*!"

The children did not insist. They didn't understand their parents, and their parents didn't understand them. It would be good to have a garden, even if it were only a "tiny little garden," but what do you get when you ask for it? A scolding! And then your father tells you for the millionth time what an angel he was as a child! . . .

Now the grown-ups spoke about a monstrous *golem* who roamed the twisting streets of Prague at midnight, scaring people out of their wits. Frau Rappaport claimed that she had personally seen the *golem* at least three times—she had often been to Prague, her younger brother Shlome lived there. . . . And then they talked about a *dibbuk* who could enter the body of a bride or of a musician.

"A *dibbuk*," Frau Klein declared, "can only enter a woman's body."

"But my *dibbuk* was a very special *dibbuk*," Frau Shapiera said in a tone of great condescension. "He took hold of a musician."

"What's a *dibbuk*?" one child inquired anxiously.

"It's the ghost of a dead man," somebody explained, "that enters the body of a living man."

At length the moon had set, the stars had vanished, and there was no more light. Somewhere a clock chimed. Then everything was still. We could hear only the breathing of the story-teller, Frau Shapiera, who came from a little village near Vilna. Frau Shapiera

had some sort or respiratory trouble. Forty years ago she had begun to complain, and from that time on she kept saying that she was mortally ill and that she wouldn't last much longer. "You'll live to be a hundred and twenty," her children and grandchildren would comfort her when she would thus foretell her early end. But her husband never comforted her. He only shook his head in despair, and she went on living. The most remarkable thing about her was her voice. She didn't speak—she rattled. Her voice sounded like a fist drumming on tin.

"Don't wake up the children," her daughter-in-law begged her. "They're fast asleep."

"So I'll tell my story in a low voice," the old woman grumbled.

But the children, waking with a start, pricked up their ears and didn't miss a word.

"In our little town," Frau Shapiera rattled, "the *dibbuk* got into a musician. . . ."

"But a *dibbuk* can't possibly get into a man," Frau Klein said emphatically. "Only a woman!"

"But my *dibbuk* could!" Frau Shapiera rattled. "He took hold of a musician! This musician used to play at every wedding in our town. He was a very pleasant, quiet man. He played the clarinet. Once the rabbi's daughter was getting married. Everybody said that the rabbi had given this daughter a dowry of twenty thousand roubles, but even if it was only ten thousand roubles it would have been a very nice dowry! Well, this musician was at the wedding. But as soon as he began to play, everybody could hear the *dibbuk* in him. . . ."

"Please don't tell any more," her daughter-in-law begged. "It's too spooky."

"No, do tell the story! I want to know how it turns out!" Frau Weiss said, quivering with excitement.

"Usually the musician played so beautifully at weddings he made everybody cry," Frau Shapiera assured her listeners. "But at that particular wedding his clarinet suddenly began to bark! Like a

dog! Naturally people asked him why it happened. But the only answer to their questions was the howling of the clarinet—it was like the howl of a wolf. And a very hungry wolf at that! You can imagine how scared all the guests were! And the musician too! He turned pale like a very pale corpse. . . .”

“Please don’t tell any more,” her daughter-in-law cried—this time it was another daughter-in-law.

“Do tell it, please!” Frau Klein implored. “What a beautiful story! How terrible for the poor man! I’m crazy about such stories!”

“Well, what else is there to tell? He removed the clarinet from his lips and wanted to say something, but even without his clarinet he could only howl, exactly like a bloodthirsty wolf. . . .”

“Hold my hand,” one of her daughters-in-law begged—it was still a different daughter-in-law. “I’m dying of fright!”

“Then his hair stood on end like tall trees on a high mountain! And all of a sudden it turned snow-white, like a roof in winter! And he saw himself in a mirror which happened to be hanging in front of him. And when he saw how changed he was, he couldn’t bear the sight of himself and he ran out of the house into the woods . . .”

“O!”

“ . . . and as he ran, he wailed and howled, like a whole pack of hungry wolves. And he grew smaller and smaller. And his howling grew fainter and fainter. . . .”

“And what became of him?”

“How do I know? He was never heard of again. In our woods there are bears and snakes. . . .”

“Poor man! Was he married? Did he have any children?”

“He was a real Jewish husband. He had eight children and a sick wife. He was a good man, you can take my word for it. The de-centest musician in our little town. But a girl was in love with him, and when he refused to have anything to do with her, she died of grief. I’m sure she was the *dibbuk*.”

"And couldn't your rabbi do anything about it?"

"What can you do in a case like that?"

"True, there's not much you can do."

"Not a thing. Maybe if somebody had noticed it in time . . . but after a *dibbuk* has been in a man for a few days . . ."

"Before today I didn't know," said Frau Klein, deeply moved, "that a *dibbuk* could get into a man, too."

"Now, now, that's enough!" one of the daughters-in-law protested. "We must consider the children!"

"All right, we'll talk about something else. Something more cheerful. In the old graveyard in our town," Frau Shapiera rattled, "where all the lovers used to meet—in my time of course there was still such a thing as love . . ."

Kupke Calls on Postmaster Mayer

KUPKE was now the only man in our house who did no work. He had been kicked out of the packing department too, and now roamed about town doing nothing. If taken to task, he would rudely reply that he had his pension. But everyone knew that pensions had become worthless. The money continued to come in at the end of every month, but it was inflation money, and, as he told Lina, "The whole monthly payment isn't enough for one good drink. . . . As long as this paper money swindle goes on, you'd better find some work. I'm going to try for a civil service job. After all, I was wounded in the war."

Lina didn't for a moment believe his story about the civil service, but what could she do? She looked for work, and found it—in a laundry.

However, Kupke didn't remain entirely inactive. Actually the civil service story was not an invention. But in the meantime he

sponged on everyone. No one in the house could escape him. He was through with politics, he told everybody he met, now he had a wife, and that was worry enough. "I never knew what it meant to have a woman on my neck," he lamented, raising his eyes like a martyr. He unburdened himself to everybody, without distinction. "Do you happen to have a thousand marks on you? I'll pay you back, tomorrow or the day after, positively. Thank you."

Or:

"I won't be unemployed much longer. I could get back my job as a packer any day, but I'd be a fool to do it! I wouldn't think of it! I have other plans! Do you happen to have three thousand marks on you? I'll pay you back next week. Lina's making good money. Thank you!"

Or:

"I'm a wounded war veteran without a job. I've sent in my application to the civil service. Does that surprise you? Say, have you got . . . What? No? Never mind. If you haven't got it, you haven't got it, damn it!"

Or:

"Shit!"

Or:

"Say! I've got an appointment to see somebody at the postoffice! Did you hear the news? They're going to take me on! You don't believe me? Just wait and see! You wouldn't have . . . No? Never mind!"

The same day:

"What? I already got something from you today? And you think I shouldn't drink so much? Who drinks? Me? Say, if I wasn't so nice to weaklings, you'd see something! Now get the hell out of here, and make it quick!"

The other got out, and very quickly indeed.

"The louse!" cried Kupke after him.

Then he went to the main postoffice.

"I was asked to come in today. My name is Herman Kupke; the first letter is K—like in King. I have an appointment."

"Wait a minute," growled the clerk at the information window.

Kupke waited. He didn't mind waiting. He sat on a bench opposite the window. Why shouldn't he wait? He had waited until now, he had waited for a long time, for months, and he didn't mind waiting ten minutes more, even half an hour, even an hour, or an hour and a half. . . .

My Lord! . . . After two hours he stood up and tried again.

In a humble, wheedling voice, he said: "I beg your pardon. I've been waiting here for the last two hours. My name is Kupke, first letter K, like in King. I have an appointment," and he cast a timid sidewise glance at the INFORMATION sign swinging over his head.

"You have an appointment? Why didn't you say so in the first place?" said the surly clerk, looking up from his figures. "First door to the right, then straight ahead, then to the left, next to the last door, Room 29."

Room 29. A dark brown door. Sign: ADOLF MAYER III, POSTMASTER.

He knocked.

"C'm' in-n!"

That was Herr Mayer III. He was seated. He didn't look up. He was busy adding figures. Herman Kupke stood. He stood waiting for a long time. He thought: No use getting ideas. I'll find out soon enough what it's all about. . . . He twisted his sweaty cap in his fingers. He thought: Good thing I shaved the day before yesterday, you feel pretty small before a big shot like this, he looks like a major. . . .

"Your military certificates are satisfactory," Herr Mayer said at last. "From now on you're an assistant letter-carrier. Right?"

"Yes, Herr Postmaster."

"Did you bring your pension card?"

"Here it is, Herr Postmaster."

"So you have a fifty percent indemnity?"

"I was really entitled to seventy-five percent, but I got cheated out of it by a Jew."

"A Jew? How so?"

"The surgeon-major who examined me in 1917 was a Jew, Herr Postmaster."

"Well?"

"He was near-sighted and he wore a pair of glasses on his hook nose, and he talked through his nose too, just like all Jews, Herr Postmaster."

"Well? What's that got to do with your pension?"

"Everything depended on him, Herr Postmaster. I was positive that I'd get seventy-five percent. But you know how Jews are. If I ever lay my hands on that fellow, he won't like it very much. He lives here in town, but I've never run across him!"

"What's the name of your Jew?"

"Doctor Pick is his name, Herr Postmaster."

"What? Pick?" Postmaster Mayer's entire blond pomaded wig moved as he raised his eyebrows in astonishment. "Is he a red-head by any chance?"

"That's him! A redhead!" Herman Kupke exclaimed. He suddenly realized with fright that he had forgotten to add the title, and he stammered quickly: "Herr Postmaster!"

"Your surgeon-major has been my family physician for the last two years," Kupke heard with dismay. "I see him in church every Sunday, and every Wednesday we play skat! I want you to know Doctor Pick is a Protestant! What gave you the idea that he was a Jew?"

"Because," Kupke stammered, unable to open or close his mouth, "because he didn't give me seventy-five percent. . . ."

"What are you standing there for? Report tomorrow morning at seven o'clock. Room 10. And don't let me hear you ever again call Doctor Pick a Jew!"

"At your service, Herr Postmaster!"

Kupke turned stiffly.

He marched out.

Oof! I got off easy!

Herr Fishman was just coming out of Castle Street.

"Say, it's wonderful meeting you like this, Fishman! Let me have ten thousand marks, quick! I've got a job in the postoffice! What do you think of that? Postal employee—first class! Won't Lina be surprised! Thank you!"

"But why do you always drink so much?" Herr Fishman shook his head reproachfully.

"So much dust is always getting in my throat!" Kupke said innocently, widening his blue eyes.

Then he went straight over to Müller's to have a glass of beer.

"Back again?"

"Now don't get nasty, little feller! I'm not asking for credit! Here's the money! And I've got a job, too!" He jingled his keys in his pocket.

Then Lina came home after nine hours at the washtub. Her face was swollen and greasy. She was pregnant. She was so tired she could hardly stand up. She ached all over—her back, her bones, her heart. Frau Schade, the midwife, said it was weak ligaments, and that washing clothes was no work for an expectant mother. That was easy to say.

"Lina, I've got some good news for you," Herman said.

"Yes." That was all she said. She wasn't the least bit curious.

"I have a job, Lina!"

His voice sounded as though he had been holding his breath for a whole hour.

But Lina was so weary.

"We'll see," she said. That was all.

"You could at least congratulate me and give me a kiss!"

"Leave me alone. You reek of beer again."

Kupke looked at Lina. He saw everything there was to see about

her and, like all men of his calibre, decided that in her present condition his wife looked grotesque. As a matter of fact, he would have liked to burst out laughing, but he thought better of it. He didn't trust himself. His conscience was not quite clear concerning Lina. Lina worked like a horse, and it was a long time since he had earned a pfennig.

"I'm a postman," he said.

"We'll see how long it'll last."

Then he yelled at her: "Can't you even be glad about it? I thought you'd be glad, and now you're practically bawling me out!"

"Stop yelling. You make me nervous," Lina said. "Here's some money; go buy some bread at Handtke's. But don't lose the money the way you did last time. It's all I have."

Kupke went out to get the bread, thinking: Things will be different pretty soon. Just wait till I work a little while and bring home some money. Then you'll have to listen to what I say. I'll swat you until you remember who's boss. Just wait till I make a little money.

Jewish Weekend

FATHER didn't have much time for us children. He was at home only from Friday to Sunday, and during that time he tried to make "good Jews" of us. Father was a "good Jew" himself, and he wanted us to be good Jews too.

Friday evenings we had to accompany him to the former bowling alley, where he gave us a prayer book and watched us carefully. When he was satisfied with our praying he nodded approval. But if he caught us skipping a passage, he gave us a poke in the back.

Father was not the only one who watched carefully. Herr Wolf

watched his sons. And other fathers did too. In spite of that, we sometimes succeeded in exchanging a few furtive words, for instance about what was being shown that week at the movies, or about the dwarfs and their trained dogs who were performing in one of the town squares.

"Hush!" the fathers would interrupt us sternly, poking us in the back of the neck. "What prayer are you saying now?" they asked, to test us.

At moments like those the Jewish fathers were far from enthusiastic about their children. As though apologizing for their children's frivolity, they would redouble the ardour of their own prayers. But the children's behaviour in the synagogue must certainly have nullified whatever benefit their fathers obtained from God through their fanatical devotion.

After the Friday evening meal with the Weiss family, we went back upstairs to our own apartment. It was then that Father would catechize us about our newly acquired knowledge, that is, our knowledge of Hebrew, not what we had learned in school.

We still had our daily Hebrew lessons. But not with Herr Baron—he had emigrated to Palestine. Our new tutor was Herr Schröbel.

From what we had heard the grown-ups say, we knew that the new teacher was not really a teacher at all, but a *schnorrer*, a failure. The grown-ups said that he had come to our town a pauper, and had gone about begging for food and shelter. They said that when he arrived in town, he had nothing on but a pair of trousers and a filthy false shirt front under a ragged coat. He didn't own even a pair of suspenders, and his tattered trousers were tied on with a piece of rope. He didn't even have socks on, the grown-ups often told one another in our presence.

How he had managed to stay in town, we did not know. He had simply refused to go elsewhere. Every week he *schnorred* some money from the local Jews, visiting each one in turn on a certain day of the week. He might be thrown out of a house the fourth

time he came, but that didn't stop him from appearing on time the fifth week, with so disarming, so humble a smile that he was given something again. What could you do? He was a Jew, after all, and you couldn't help being sorry for him. So he was given an old pair of trousers, a discarded hat, a pair of shoes, a shirt, even an old umbrella for rainy days. It was soon agreed that he was to be invited to meals by the different Jewish families in rotation. It was true that he was a little cracked, and unfortunately he drank a little too much—clearly an effect of the war. Many men had returned from the war a little touched in the head, and many had taken to drink during the long months they spent ill-adjusted and idle, trying to realize that their four years of daily bombardment were over. . . .

Later it turned out that the *schnorrer* had not been born a *schnorrer*, but was descended from a distinguished and educated Jewish family. Before the war he had even studied in a rabbinical college! At any rate, he was well versed in Jewish lore, he knew the sacred books, and could even speak modern Hebrew. When this got around, some Eastern Jewish families offered him a job as tutor to their children, because clearly he intended to remain in town. . . . All this we knew about our teacher.

Every afternoon we went to the bowling alley, and there we laughed ourselves sick, Herr Schröbel was so funny-looking, more than six feet tall and thin as a beanstalk. But we laughed chiefly because one pupil recognized the trousers and another the hat he was wearing. And a third would say: "I've seen that faded necktie some place before." We let him talk, shout, protest, but we learned very little from him.

We were not even impressed by his head wound. Plenty of Jews had been shot in the head in the course of the war—there was nothing special in that. Even Kohn, the plumber, with his two artificial ribs, was more interesting. Our teacher's desperate plea, "I command you to please pay attention to a wounded war veteran," never moved us. Herr Schröbel a war veteran? That seemed to us so im-

probable that we openly disputed his claim. He produced a stack of documents to prove it, but still we disbelieved. Then he showed us his cross. And still we didn't believe him. Then the tortured man took out his handkerchief to wipe his sweating forehead. Whereupon Norbert Rosenbaum exclaimed: "I'm sure I've seen that handkerchief somewhere before!"

Our chief occupation during our afternoons in the bowling alley was trading stamps and butterflies.

But every Friday evening my father wanted to know: "What are Rashi's comments on this week's Bible chapter?"

Of course I knew nothing of these comments by the famous Bible and Talmud scholar, born in the year 1040 and deceased in 1105.

If Rashi had been interested in questions like: "Which is preferable—a free kick from the edge of the field or a corner kick?" or: "What make of automobile is better—Wanderer or Adler?" I would have found no difficulties in answering them. But these problems didn't exist eight hundred years ago.

"I'm spending a fortune for your education!" Father cried in horror, and began to beat me. It didn't hurt me much; Father swore that it hurt him terribly to have to beat me, but that later I would be thankful to him for every blow.

I doubted it, but I kept my doubts to myself.

Herman fared likewise.

I told Father that I'd rather see him take some interest in my non-Jewish studies, but he didn't want to hear about them. Our poor showing in Bible class depressed him, and as a punishment he forbade us to go to the movies for a month.

"I am not an inhuman father," he asserted. "But what will become of you if you won't learn anything about Rashi or Rambam? At your age I knew all those things by heart!"

"I don't want to be a rabbi," I protested, wiping away my tears.

"You don't want to be a rabbi? Have you any idea what you do want to be? Even a rich businessman, or a famous professor, must have a Jewish education! Do you suppose a Rothschild doesn't

know Rashi's comments on each week's Bible chapter, or who Rambam was? Or Einstein. Now mind you: the great professor, Einstein, he knows all that!"

Alas, I knew all about Herr Rothschild and Herr Einstein! They were constantly held up to us as models. I admired them, but I couldn't stomach them. Father, Herr Klein, Herr Wolf—all the Jewish fathers of our acquaintance—regarded this Jewish banker and this professor of solar and lunar eclipses ("He invented something like that," Father would say with veneration) as model Jews worthy of imitation. It was even proposed that I should learn to play the violin, because one day Father read in the newspaper that Einstein was a good violinist. I was thoroughly fed up with both Rothschild and Einstein.

"They don't know any more about Rashi than I do!" I cried in a rage.

"And how do you think they made all their money, the Rothschilds?"

I was silent. How could I know that?

"And where did he get his great knowledge from—Herr Professor Einstein? Well? Well, smarty, where did he get it from?"

"I don't know," I said. Suddenly I couldn't help laughing. "I bet he didn't get it from Herr Schröbel!"

But Father was in no laughing mood.

"Go to bed," he said severely. When he ran short of arguments, he always sent me to bed.

"But I've got to stay up until Anna Gaal comes and turns the lights out. This is Friday night!" Anna was still our *Shabbesgoite*.

"Get to bed," he insisted. "I'll stay up myself. You've got to be punished."

Almost every Friday ended in this depressing fashion. Whose fault was it? Father had his standards, but I couldn't get interested in Herr Schröbel's lessons.

Every week we had an hour of religion with the German Jewish Cantor Bamberger. We studied Biblical history and Hebrew, we

had to read and recite Hebrew passages. But Father refused to have anything to do with this "German" religious instruction, declaring that these lessons might just as well be for Catholics or Protestants. "As if so poor a knowledge of religion could be sufficient for a Jew!" he exclaimed each time I told him what Herr Bamberger had taught us. This Cantor Bamberger was, it is true, a real licensed professor, but he didn't eat kosher and once he had even been seen taking a streetcar on *Shabbes*—that kind of a *goy* was scarcely an ideal teacher for Jewish children!

I didn't like to argue with Father, but I preferred Herr Bamberger as a teacher. I listened to him, and learned from him with pleasure; his lessons were not dry like Schröbel's, and he often read us passages from religious novels or poems about Biblical heroes. But Father never wanted to know what we had learned from Bamberger. He was interested only in Schröbel's lessons.

On Saturday mornings Father was a changed man. All trace of Friday night's quarrel had vanished completely. Our weekday clothes had been put away in the closet, and Father had brought out our Sabbath clothes. He walked part of the way to school with us, and as he left us to turn off toward the bowling alley, he would say: "Good *Shabbes*, children." The Sabbath was always like that with us Fishmans. Tempers were never bad on that day.

In the afternoon we sat three on a bench in the little grove. Father, too, wore his best clothes on the Sabbath and so did all the other Jews. The women wore their best dresses, and many of them had fur neckpieces, earrings, chains, or bracelets. I didn't like this dressing up. Xaver Wunder and others from our house always said the Jews must be lousy with money, or they wouldn't be able to dress up like that. Besides, everybody in the street turned to look at us, knowing that we were Jews celebrating our "Jewish Sunday." . . . I wondered why the grown-up Jews didn't notice that they were conspicuous, or why they didn't mind being conspicuous if they did notice it. I didn't want to be conspicuous.

Once I tried to explain to Father why I didn't like to attract attention in the classroom on the Sabbath. I told him about the teachers and about the pupils; I even told him that it would be too bad to get ink spots on my best suit—I thought up as many arguments as I could. But he didn't understand me. His answer was always the same: "On the Sabbath a Jew must be well dressed." I gave it up for the time being, but resolved that as soon as I was grown up I would wear my ordinary clothes on the Sabbath. In other ways, too, I wanted to be different from Father. At the same time, I was very fond of him. He was so lonely and had no one but us. . . .

One Sunday he invited the Weisses to go for a walk. We sauntered through the big park on the outskirts of the town. The older people walked too slowly for us children; Herr Weiss had a wooden leg and could only limp. The park was full of signs saying "Don't," but benches were placed advantageously wherever there was a view.

"It's beautiful here!" Frau Dvora Weiss sighed. She was always enthusiastic about a view. She would have liked to sit down, but all the benches were full.

"Very beautiful, really beautiful," agreed Father. "Jacob! Herman! Look at the nice view!"

"Yes, really very beautiful!" said Herr Haskel Weiss, tired from limping.

The park was always crowded on Sunday; often there were whole clubs. The place was full of noise and bustle and I never noticed the "peaceful charms of nature." Wherever we walked, we found others. Wherever we stopped, others had stopped before us, and these others said exactly the same things as Father and Haskel Weiss and his wife Dvora—only they said them in German.

"It's beautiful here!"

"Yes, very beautiful! Otto! Elfriede! Look, what a beautiful view!"

"Yes, beautiful!"

When we came to the park café, we always had to wait a long time for a table. A mechanical piano played waltzes and marches and polkas. Waitresses carried huge trays piled high with delicious-smelling cheese cake which we were not allowed to eat, much as we craved it. We weren't even allowed to drink coffee with milk. We drank tea and watched others eating cheese cake and drinking coffee with milk. We were not allowed to eat milk dishes before six o'clock, because we had had meat for lunch. Besides, the cheese cake might have been baked with margarine, and then it wouldn't have been kosher.

"I'm so mad I could bust!" I said.

Father told me I should be ashamed of myself.

I thought: When I grow up I will eat cheese cake whenever I feel like it, any time of the day. I'll never observe the Jewish dietary laws. . . . But I kept this resolution to myself. No use proclaiming it aloud.

At half-past five, Frau Weiss said: "I'm cold."

"Waitress!" Father called, and he wanted to pay the cheque.

"The idea!" Herr Weiss protested, fumbling for his purse. "It's my turn!"

"The idea!" Frau Weiss protested too. "Haskel, pay it. Quick! Pay it, Haskel!"

"Today you are my guests," Father said, and paid. "Besides, it's only fifty thousand marks. What is fifty thousand marks? Tomorrow it will be sixty thousand or more."

"Just the same, I don't like you to pay for us," Herr Weiss declared.

Then we went home.

Early Monday morning, Father would go on the road; he wouldn't be back till Friday.

Many children envied me because I could do what I pleased for four whole days. "In the first place it isn't true," I explained. "And in the second place you don't know how lucky you are."

Why they were luckier than I was, I never told them.
They all had their mother.

*"The Slender Cedar That Kisses
the Clouds"*

FRITZ SCHWARTZ was twenty-three years old, a native of East Prussia. He had been in our town for eleven weeks, as a clerk in Max Kahn's department store, but during these eleven weeks he had made no business contacts. Evenings he attended lectures, read old Berlin newspapers and magazines in the Café Megalomania, and sometimes went to the theatre or to a concert.

On Sundays he went on hikes. He put on his shorts and a sport shirt and carried a knapsack. He took the streetcar to the city limits, and then set out on foot, stretching his hairy legs in long strides, his dark mane ruffled by the wind. The knapsack contained an alcohol stove with dry fuel, a paper of rice and a bag of dried fruit, a bathing suit, a towel, and two books.

His fellow-workers in the drygoods department looked tired and out of sorts on Monday mornings, but Fritz Schwartz came in tanned and rosy, beaming with health. He never went to dances, and was a teetotaller. He was a *Wandervogel*, he said. His fellow-workers liked him, he was pleasant and co-operative. But there was something a little funny about him, they said. When a fellow can't take a glass of beer, he must be a little touched in the head, they said.

This Fritz Schwartz, son of a little rabbi on the eastern border of Germany, founded a Jewish youth group in our town.

The name of our group was the Star of David. We were young Jews and proud of it. From now on we ceased to be ashamed of

our origin, and on every occasion proclaimed our nationality. We were courageous and ready to assist everybody, Jew or Gentile, white, yellow, red, or black. We were Zionists. We had attended a lecture on the "Jewish state." This Jewish state was not yet a reality, it was only the title of a book by Theodor Herzl, who was the founder of Zionism and unfortunately no longer alive. All that Fritz Schwartz had told us. There were nine of us between twelve and fifteen years old. Fritz, our leader, was much older.

That Fritz Schwartz should take an interest in us filled Father with pride. But he was a little surprised; Fritz was a German Jew, and as a rule the German Jews refused to have anything to do with us. For an Eastern Jew it was easier to become acquainted with a Gentile than with his German fellow-Jews. Only once a year, at the most, at the German Jewish *Chanukah* ball when the famous Horwitz sisters, refugees from Moscow, performed their Russian dances, was the ice broken between the native and immigrant Jews.

At that ball, the German Jewish ladies and gentlemen nodded benevolently to Chaim Blumenstein, the rag dealer, who occupied a corner table with his wife and his four grown-up and dowryless daughters. Or they nodded a greeting to Eisig Rappaport, the furrier, who was a fine young man and supported his mother and his unmarried sister with so much filial and fraternal devotion that everyone knew about it—he hid it from no one. And they nodded to people whose names they didn't know at all, and to people whose names they hardly knew. . . . But immediately after the *Chanukah* ball was over, Herr Chaim Blumenstein with his wife and daughters, Herr Eisig Rappaport with his sister and mother, and this one and that one—all the Eastern Jews—knew that they would be forgotten for another year. What Eastern Jew could boast that he had been invited to the house of a German Jewish family? Not even the famous Horwitz sisters of Moscow! And here, out of the blue, came this Fritz Schwartz! An enigma!

Father wanted to know everything about Herr Schwartz and

what we did with him. I told him that Fritz always gave us a talk.

"What about?" Father inquired.

"About great Jews."

"Is that all?" Father asked.

"He teaches us songs, too!"

"What songs?" Father wanted to know.

"The song about the slender cedar that kisses the clouds."

"No other songs?"

"Yes," I said. "'*Hatikvah*,' the song of longing for our Jewish fatherland."

"Is that all?" Father continued asking.

"That's all so far," I said regretfully. "But we're going to learn other Zionist songs soon."

Then Father became distrustful. Was Herr Schwartz a Zionist, then?

"We're all Zionists," I said.

Father laughed. "Don't be foolish. You're not a Zionist!"

"I'm a Jew and I'm proud of it. I'm a Zionist and I want to go to Palestine!" I declared.

At that, Father stopped laughing. I was a foolish child, he said. I'd do better to become a *real German*. I had no idea, he explained, what it meant to emigrate and re-adapt oneself, to get accustomed to a new country and new people, a new language and a new climate. . . . He knew only too well what it meant. "You're too young to understand all that. I forbid you to be a Zionist!"

There was no arguing with Father on that subject. He began to think of Schwartz as a dubious character. He had heard strange things about him. "Why," he asked me, "does this Schwartz spend Sundays in the woods with shorts and a knapsack and no necktie, more like a savage than a clerk in that fine department store! Just like a Communist! He'll make Communists out of my children! A nice thing to look forward to! It's lucky I found out about it in time! I forbid you to see any more of this Schwartz!"

A week later, Father lifted the ban. Fritz had come to see us and

had spoken to Father, assuring him that he was no Communist and that he wore shorts on Sundays only for reasons of health—"not for political reasons, my dear Herr Fishman."

Father listened to him carefully, and told us later that a great weight had been lifted from his heart. After his talk with Schwartz, it pleased him to see a young educated German Jew in his own home. Naturally he had no objections against shorts for reasons of health. "Only when Communists wear them, then it's bad! Don't misunderstand me, Herr Schwartz. But a Jew, of all people, shouldn't be a Communist!"

He was quite right in this, Fritz admitted. Moreover, he felt compelled to compliment him. "You speak very good German, even though you do have a slight accent."

"For every mistake I make I'd like to have a hundred thousand marks. No more," said Father, flattered.

"No, no!" Fritz Schwartz hastened to assure him.

"Oh, yes, yes!" Father shook his head knowingly.

And we were again allowed to join the Star of David for a half-day hike every Sunday, from one to six.

There were no more Sunday walks with Father, but he didn't seem to mind. Or was I mistaken? I had noticed that for some time we had been seeing less of him between trips.

Sometimes I thought this was not very nice of him. I imagined that he had many worries and that he had something on his mind and never told me anything. I, too, had my thoughts and never told him anything, because I was convinced that he wouldn't understand. I was positive about wanting to go to Palestine! I wanted to be a pioneer and help build the Jewish fatherland. Every member of the Star of David felt as I did.

I had decided not to stay in school much longer. I couldn't bear the sight of our teachers Opel, Grosse, and Zunk! After the putsch they had been absent for a few weeks, but then all of a sudden they were allowed to return and they were worse than ever. It was tor-

ment to be a Jew at school. In Palestine there wouldn't be such beasts! . . . Of course, all that was still my secret and Father knew nothing about it. He had forbidden me to mention it. I wanted to be a stone-mason; Fritz had told us that masons were what was most needed in Palestine.

Sometimes I thought about us Fishmans. Although I was attached to my father, he knew nothing about my plans. And possibly he too was concealing something from us, something we were not meant to know. As a matter of fact, I knew all about it.

Recently I had seen the Wolfs, and Frau Wolf had said: "Soon you'll have a mother again. Has your father told you?"

Of course Father had told me nothing. I was quite upset, but I wouldn't let on. Was it really true? Would Father do that to us? A step-mother? In the fairy-tales I knew that children with step-mothers always had a bad time of it. Step-mothers were always mean and stingy; they always let the poor children starve, and chased them out of the house in the end. True, I had stopped believing in fairy-tales a long time ago. But I was still against step-mothers. Because I didn't want one.

I was afraid that Frau Wolf might be right. Frau Weiss, too, had said recently: "Poor children, soon you won't be alone any more." I was really worried.

Lately Father had been looking very shamefaced. And all of a sudden I noticed that our house was gradually being emptied of things that had belonged to my mother! I didn't say a word, but I saw that Father was giving away everything that recalled our mother!

One day it looked as if Father were finally going to speak out. It was on a Saturday afternoon; we were sitting in the grove. Suddenly he said: "Every child has a mother who takes him for walks, tells him stories, explains life to him. Only my children have none!"

Then he stopped. Maybe tomorrow, I thought. . . . But Sunday he didn't bring up the subject. And Monday he went off again.

If my father remarried, I'd run away from home—that was my firm resolve. I wanted no new mother. My mother was dead. . . .

Then there came a time when Father was unbearable. He was nervous, he shouted at us, he even beat us—something he hadn't done for a long time. I wrote in my diary: "Without the Star of David I couldn't go on living."

At that time there were low-priced tickets for the Friday night classic series for sale in school. I would have liked to go to the theatre. "I could go after supper on Friday," I said to Father. In reply he merely asked whether I was crazy. Friday night? "A Jew doesn't go to the theatre on Friday night!"

"Not so long ago you told me not to become a Zionist, but a *real German*. But when I want to go to the theatre on Friday night like a *real German*, you're against it."

Father was furious and slapped my face. I resolved never again to tell him anything. From now on I wanted to think and do whatever I thought in my heart was right. I wouldn't lie—I'd just keep my thoughts to myself. I would keep out of his way; no use arguing with him all the time. I wrote in my diary: "Unquestionably I am one of the unhappiest men in the entire world. I have no mother, and Father doesn't understand me. If my brother were older, I could discuss with him all the things that trouble me, but he is still a child. He is almost two years younger than I am! And now I am so interested in . . ."

I spent all my free time reading Fritz Schwartz's many books. I read everything by Scott, Dickens, Gogol, Zola, Balzac, and also by Rathenau, Freud, Spengler. I would go to Fritz with a long list and say: "There are many words I can't understand. Please explain to me what socialism is. And what is psychology? And state capitalism?" I made a great effort to understand difficult books. In school, however, I made no effort at all. I had no wish to. Wasn't I soon to become a mason? Father treated me like a little child. But, I sobbed at night, he has no idea about me and my thoughts. . . .

Fritz Schwartz left us!

First we thought he was going to Palestine to be a mason.

"No, not yet," he said. "I'm going to Berlin. I've got a job as a buyer for Hermann Tietz." He was happy about it, and we were sad.

The Star of David met twice more.

Then there were no more meetings.

There was nobody to take an interest in us.

Fritz Schwartz was soon forgotten.

Father said: "I am glad the Zionist nonsense is over."

But I wasn't glad at all.

Lina and the Ghosts

TWO men turned into Castle Street. One of them, Police Inspector Braun, was well known to everybody in town. But who was the other? Where were they going? Who had been up to mischief now? They stopped in front of No. 21.

In the hall they met Frau Berta Schaller.

"Is Frau Kupke in?" Inspector Braun inquired.

"You can see for yourself," Frau Schaller said. "What do you want of the poor woman? She's half crazy already. If she isn't taken away soon, something serious is going to happen. Every night she gets a crazy fit."

No one answered her. The two men had gone upstairs.

"Come in."

"Good afternoon, Frau Kupke," the inspector said. "We want to talk to you."

The men sat down; they took paper and pencils out of their pockets. "Now we can start," the inspector said pleasantly.

Many months before, almost a whole year before, on an after-

noon as beautiful as today, with the sun just as bright, and the apartment just as cheerful, and the summer just as fragrant, Inspector Braun had sat for the first time at this kitchen table.

"You don't expect me to believe," he had thundered that day, "that you've known nothing about any of this!"

Tremblingly she had maintained that she knew nothing even then.

"But your smart husband is assistant mailman, you know that, at least!" he had jeered at her.

She had admitted anxiously that she knew that.

"Do you really!" he said sarcastically. But then he pounded the table with his fists. "No use pretending, we know everything! He's confessed everything! Where's the money he stole?"

Before the inspector could stop her, she had slid off her chair, her eyes rolling. She lay stretched out on the floor, her head resting against the kitchen cupboard and her feet touching the wall. Braun was familiar with that sort of thing; he had seen by this time that her terror was not an act, that she really knew nothing. He was sorry for this woman who lived with a man and didn't know what a scoundrel he was.

When poor Lina had regained consciousness, and sat there in front of him with chattering teeth, he informed her that her husband had been arrested as an embezzler. He told her as tactfully as possible.

"Embezzlement in the course of his official duties, my dear Madam. And please don't get excited, it will do no good; the thing has already happened. And it's not so tragic as it sounds when you hear it the first time. A murder is really much worse, ha-ha-ha!" he had said to comfort her. "He forged postal money orders, your smart husband did. Goldstein of Wilhelmstrasse—you know his shoe store—has lodged a complaint against him. Now, now, quiet down. Nobody ever lost his head for a mere forgery," he said encouragingly.

But she had thought that stealing was bad enough. "Just wait!"

she threatened through her tears. "I'll teach the beast a lesson! When he comes home this evening, he'll see something!"

"Don't set your heart on it," Braun had cautioned her. "It's not likely that he'll be home tonight. He was locked up two hours ago."

All that had happened in 1921.

And now two men were again in Lina's apartment, wanting to speak to her.

"Your husband has sent in an application about his war pension," Inspector Braun said. "Have you been informed about it?"

She had been informed about nothing.

"Here, read this. It's his letter to the insurance office. He wrote it in prison."

"I don't want to."

"It's absolutely necessary," the inspector urged her gently.

And so she read: "I, Herman Kupke, ex-soldier and truck driver, twice wounded in the world war and promoted to the rank of corporal, do hereby submit my application for an indemnity settlement. Respectfully yours, Herman Kupke, ex-corporal, recipient of the Saxon Medal for Bravery and the Iron Cross, 2nd Class."

To that letter was attached a little note reading: "Why is Kupke in prison and for how long? The Insurance Office."

Below, the answer was scribbled in pencil: "For grave thefts committed in his official capacity. Three years and six months. The Administration, per Kunze."

"I have been asked to fill out a questionnaire containing all available data about your husband," the inspector said. "I want to ask you a few questions. Now, let's see—how much did your husband pay a month toward the support of his child?"

"My husband was never married before," the poor woman answered, and her lips went white.

"Ah, please, dear Frau Kupke. We know all about it."

"And he had no illegitimate children. No, not that! No, that's not true!" she exclaimed in despair.

"Your husband has a illegitimate son; he contributed regularly to his support," the inspector persisted. He was really sorry for Lina. But what could he do? Duty was duty. He produced a few postal receipts. They were written in Kupke's hand, she couldn't deny it.

"No, I can't believe it," murmured Lina, but she did believe it.

Then Lina heard the whole story. They told her that this thief and seducer had a son—and she had been so unsuspecting! Now she wanted to know the whole truth, everything, really everything, Herr Inspector! Well, since she insisted. . . . Once upon a time, during the war, there was a streetcar conductress named Hilde Siebert. One hot summer day, one Sunday, on a lonely path in the fields. They held hands. They sat down. They lay down. Then the dear boy had left her with a big belly, and married a widow. The widow's name was Lina Hering, *née* Schultheiss. Hilde, the deserted girl, was terribly unhappy and the widow very happy, at that time—all on account of Herman Kupke! . . . And now at last Lina learned about his son! Now it all came out! There was so much! He had stolen, seduced, embezzled, and she had known nothing about it. And now she learned that he also had a son! And perhaps he had more than one child! How could she know? What could she know? It was too much! Nothing could stop her tears now, and she wept and wept and couldn't stop. . . .

Inspector Braun couldn't stand the sight of a woman crying. Whenever he saw women's tears, his strength departed. In despair, he stared at the questionnaire that he had been commissioned to fill out, but after all he couldn't go on squeezing tears out of the poor woman like a lemon. He coughed in embarrassment.

"My dear Madam, I must ask you another question," he begged softly. "What are the names of your husband's legitimate children?"

Lina said, sobbing: "We have none. I had a still-born child. I worked too hard, too long. It was a girl. Her name was going to be Margaret."

"The insurance office will decide whether the applicant, at present residing in the local prison, is entitled to a continuation of his pension, or whether he will be granted an indemnity settlement," said the man with Inspector Braun, who until now had not spoken.

"It doesn't make any difference to me," Lina sobbed. "Do whatever you want. I can't go on any longer, I can't. . . ."

"Be brave," the inspector told her as he was leaving. "Some day your husband will come back. Try to think of that."

"That's just what I am thinking," Lina sobbed.

The two men had gone. The evening shadows were falling. Lina Kupke was seized with terror. She was alone. Her heart was alone. Her hands were alone. All her life she had been alone. All along she had been swindled, cheated. The first of them had been named Hering, and he had drunk himself to death. He had passed away and she had remained. Why hadn't she died with him? Why had she been left a widow? Why hadn't she done away with herself, right then and there? She had never told anybody how creepy the nights had been in the apartment where he had died. She had lied to everybody when she said that she was really happy after the drunkard's death. She had loved him. He had been her first husband. . . . And the nights, oh, the nights after his death were so horrible! . . . And it hadn't worked that time she had turned on the gas. . . .

Then she had fallen into Kupke's hands—Kupke, who had told her that he didn't drink. But that, of course, was a lie. All men drank. All men were criminals. They were all against Lina. The whole world was against Lina. . . . And the ghosts, oh . . . every night they came into her apartment and sought to strangle her. . . . But even that was a cheat; they only scared her and let her live. . . . No, she didn't want to live, she had no will to live, if only the gas would work, but it never worked, she would get up again and turn it off, no, not gas. . . .

In her linen closet, fragrant with lavender and soap, there were numerous pictures of her first husband. Once before she had hung Hering's portrait in the kitchen, but Kupke, soused as usual, had smashed bottles of beer against the mirror, then against the kitchen cupboard, and finally against the picture of his wife's first husband. Then he had pulled the picture down, and flung it right through the windowpane. Splinters of glass, and Hering's beer-stained picture, had fallen down into the yard below. And then Hering's successor had beaten Lina so long that in the end she had run out in her nightgown, screaming, up to the attic where the children of the house played in the daytime. . . .

The attic! . . . Her face changed at the thought. Indeed it was no longer Lina's face. The ghosts, too, saw that new face! For once let *them* be scared. Aha! Kupke in jail? It's just another lie about Kupke being in jail. He'll come home tonight. . . . When he finds the pictures, he'll raise hell again. . . . The pictures and the ghosts! . . .

She took a hammer and nails out of the tool box and hung all the pictures on the four walls. In many of the photographs she was standing at Hering's side, first a happy smiling bride, and then an unhappy wife. . . . Kupke wouldn't laugh when he saw these pictures, either. . . . But she wouldn't be sitting there waiting to be beaten again. . . . She wouldn't be waiting any more. . . . The ghosts, too, would be surprised. She wouldn't be there . . . she would hide . . . in the attic! . . . She would hide herself so cleverly that no one would find her. . . .

She rummaged through the chest of drawers for her wedding veil. There it was. She put it on her convulsively wagging head. She couldn't hold her head still. . . . If only it would be still for a minute. . . . But no. . . . Before, she hadn't known what men were, but now she knew all about them. At least she would never marry a third time. They were criminals, all of them; it was no use. . . .

She sat on the floor, with her wedding veil in her hands. On the

floor the ghosts were powerless against her. The ghosts were dangerous only when she was standing. But she wasn't as dumb as all that. She knew now how to handle them. It made her laugh. . . . Why was she laughing now? She herself had forgotten. She cried. She thought of the night that was coming. She cried.

I am out of my mind, she thought.

"I am out of my mind," she said aloud. Terror seized her, and she hid under her veil. That way the ghosts wouldn't know she was still in the room!

Hush-sh!

"It runs in the family," she said aloud.

She listened.

"You don't have to hide," she said softly.

She stood up. She went over to the wall. Her wedding veil rustled softly.

In the mirror she saw a strange face, veiled in white.

"Who is that?" she cried, recoiling. The stranger said exactly the same thing.

"His pictures are hanging all around the room," the stranger in the mirror whispered. "Your father died of drink. Your mother didn't cry when they brought him home. She laughed!"

"Help! Help! Help!"

Sh-sh!

There was a knock at the door.

Quick, put out the candles! It must be the ghosts! They had come to get her!

Sh-sh! Nobody's here! Sh-sh! Don't open!

"It's me, Ida!" a voice called.

Lina opened the door.

Ida Gaal could see nothing. "Why don't you light a lamp? And what are you crying for?"

Lina shook her head.

"What have you got on your head? You frighten me!"

"Hush-sh! The ghosts are here again!" Lina winked knowingly and covered the mirror with a towel. "I've always known it. Tomorrow we'll all be dead. But I'm not afraid. I'll hide. I'll hide under my veil. Then they won't see me."

"Come, eat something," said Ida Gaal. "I've brought you a few things. Here, take them."

"It runs in the family," Lina said, laughing harshly. She rolled the bread into little balls. "Margarine sandwiches, lentils, potatoes, lentils, beans, potatoes . . ."

"Go ahead and eat! You give me the creeps!"

". . . horse meat. It runs in the family."

"What runs in the family?" Ida Gaal inquired, looking around at the pictures on the wall. "It's very pretty the way you've fixed it up." She praised the madwoman, and thought to herself: There's nothing to be done now; tomorrow she'll really have to be taken away.

"Father drank himself to death," Lina giggled.

"But your mother is still alive."

"She drinks too," Lina whispered. "No, that's not true. Mother's laughing," and she stuffed little balls of bread into her mouth until it was so full she couldn't close it.

"You know," said Ida Gaal, suddenly impatient with her neighbour, "it's all right to be a little touched, but too much is too much!"

"I tried gas once," Lina whispered, and spat the bread out on the table.

"What did you try?" Ida cried.

"Nothing, nothing at all," Lina said softly. Her eyes were wild. She chewed and chewed, though she had nothing in her mouth. "Nothing at all. Turned it off again. No, not gas. Do you want this nice picture of me? I'm giving it to you. No. Go away."

Ida Gaal retreated toward the door.

"Go on! Leave me alone with my ghosts. Go away," said Lina, smiling. "Go."

This was the last word anyone heard her say.

When everyone was asleep in the rear part of the house, she took a candle and a clothes-line and went up to the attic.

Freight trains rumbled through the night.

Their drawn-out whistles could be heard as far as 21 Castle Street.

From the chest onto which she had climbed she could see the sky and the stars.

She was afraid of the ghosts. Nothing else.

And then a huge ghost came toward her!

She only whimpered. She dared not cry.

She fell forward.

A cloud of dust fell from the beam where she swung, and settled on her torn wedding veil.

Next morning, the whole house searched for the madwoman. It was Franz Schaller who found Lina. She was all blue, her tongue stuck out, her eyes were indescribable. She hung miserably from the clothes-line.

In her apartment a little note was found. Just three words. The letters, straggling, misshapen, were deciphered by the police.

"He knows why."

Kupke, informed as kindly as possible of his wife's suicide and shown the note, merely shrugged.

"I don't know why. Not me. I've been locked up here all the time. How could I know?"

The Wife

I WAS standing at the window as she entered our house for the first time, her hand on Father's arm. Then I heard her voice on the stairs, loud, unfamiliar. Before Father opened our door, I hid.

"Where are the children?" was her first question.

I was standing in a corner, between the door and closet, very small and thin.

"Jacob," Father called gently. "Come here, my child. This is your new mother."

"A fine big boy," she praised me, patting my cheek. "He looks exactly like the picture you gave me, Joseph. And where is the little one?"

"Where is Herman?" Father asked me.

"He has gone to bed already," I said, turning my face away. She had a fur piece around her neck, and I couldn't bear the smell of moth flakes it gave off. I ran to my room.

"Leave him alone," I heard her say to my father, with a loud laugh. "It's late now. He'll get used to me."

"Has she come?" Herman asked me. Of course he wasn't asleep.

"The very sight of her makes me sick! I'll go to sea and be a cabin boy," I said.

She wore a wig because she was pious, and pious Jewesses always wear wigs. She had a sharp, protruding, forceful chin. She was not young.

She soon noticed that I never called her "Mother." "It's your bad instincts," she declared, adding: "I'm telling you!"

She followed anything she said with this sharp little phrase: "I'm telling you!"

Father stopped going on the road. He had opened a small shop. At noon he came home for lunch.

When he was out of the house his new wife plagued me with questions about my dead mother.

"What did she wear, suits or dresses? And where are her dresses?"

"I don't know."

"What did she cook?"

"I don't remember."

"But you must know what she liked to cook?"

"No, I don't remember."

"Funny. Your father won't tell me, either."

I maintained a stubborn silence, refusing to answer her questions. My dead mother was no concern of this woman.

"I can see that your bad instincts are pretty strong for your age," she said to me spitefully. "But I am stronger than you are!"

And even though I made no answer, she repeated:

"Yes, I am! I am stronger than you are!"

She was so bigoted I resolved not to live at home much longer. She pried into my affairs, often surprising me in my room with my head uncovered. "You don't feel right unless you're sinning," she declared. "You will go to hell!"

"Your Jacob isn't a Jew," she said to my father.

"Your mother is a pious woman," Father admonished me. "You must obey her. You're very stubborn, I hear. Your mother isn't satisfied with you."

My mother is dead, I thought.

Your wife is not my mother, I thought.

Frau Weiss wasn't satisfied with Father's choice, either.

The two women had had an argument the very first Friday morning, Frau Weiss maintaining that a real Polish carp must be served with a sweet, not a sour sauce.

Frau Weiss was acquainted with the family of Fishman's new wife. She had come with her parents, before the war, from Sambor to R——, and Father had met her in R—— on one of his business trips. She was the oldest of eight sisters, and her only brother had been killed while serving with the Austrians on the Italian front. When she came to Germany, she was old enough to be married, but she found no husband. "Her family is pious, there's nothing to be said against them on that score," Frau Weiss said approvingly. "And they're a poor family, too, the Wechslers. Old Herr Wechsler

was a cantor, he earned next to nothing." The family was supported by the mother. She sold kosher margarine, goose fat, sugar, coffee, tea, and chicory; and her daughters made dresses at home for Jewish firms. "Not easy for a *shadchen* to find husbands for so many girls," Frau Weiss commented.

Father had married one of the eight.

I still hadn't learned to call her "Mother," and I despised Herman because he was able to do it right away. I would never be able to, I knew that. I'd rather have bitten off my tongue.

She tormented me. "Which bed did she die in?"

"I don't know."

"But you do know! You were a big boy then. Did she die in my bed or in Father's bed?"

"I don't know."

"You must tell me!"

"In your bed."

"I always knew it!" she cried. "And how about the furniture? Is it arranged the way it was at the time of her death?"

"Leave me alone. I don't remember."

"You must tell me! I want to know the whole truth!"

"Well, if you must know, the furniture is just as it was then."

It was not true—we hadn't even lived here, and the furniture, the beds, everything had been bought by Father after the war. But I had noticed that she was afraid. And because she tormented me, I was glad. I told her these lies because she wouldn't leave me alone. Besides, she refused to believe the truth. To her, the truth seemed too simple to be true.

At that time I began to write my first poems. I didn't want anybody to read them, and hid them in my room with my diary. All my poems described inhuman sufferings, bitter torment, hopelessness; they spoke of the soul and forsaken hearts. I was also preoccupied with the problems of God, justice, guilt, and expiation.

I was inspired largely by Dostoevsky's novels, which at that time I preferred to any others, even to novels by German authors. I was intoxicated by these gigantic works. I was in a fever. I dreamed at night that I was an inmate of the Siberian House of the Dead, a victim in the struggle for freedom. I was shocked at the sight of the poor pawnbroker's corpse, and accused the student Raskolnikov of murder. Alyosha, the murderer Rogozhin, Dimtry—they all sat by my bed whispering their secrets into my ear. I was sick without being sick.

One day I surprised the woman rummaging in my drawers and tearing up the sheets of paper on which my poems were written.

I rushed to rescue my papers, but the woman was stronger than I. She destroyed everything, absolutely everything.

"There!" she panted with satisfaction.

She told Father that I had written terrible things, nothing but sinful thoughts. Father didn't say a word. Then she began to cry, saying that I must have inherited my bad instincts from my mother. She wrung her hands, scratched her scalp under her wig, cried, and uttered threats against me.

"Please leave Jacob alone," Father begged, trying to protect me. He had come to know her addiction to dramatic scenes.

I decided to write a play. I had a title for it. A marvellous title, never before used by any author! *The Fight with the Dragon*, that's what I wanted to call my play.

In the six months after his marriage Father seemed to have grown many years older. Without the slightest pretext, quarrels broke out between him and his wife, the disputes flaring up suddenly and immediately assuming terrible proportions. I listened to them, trembling with anger. I hated this woman. I was sorry for my poor father. I couldn't always remain silent, and from time to time intervened in the exchange of vituperations.

Then she would blame me for her misunderstandings with Father.

"You never think that you yourself are to blame for anything," I said. "You're always blaming other people."

"What do you want of me, all of you!" Father cried, holding his hands to his ears. "Why are you all shouting so!"

"I'll divorce you!" the woman threatened.

"Go ahead, get a divorce," Father said. "But why must you shout so loud? Is my home a madhouse?"

"*Your* home?" the woman mocked him. "Is your name Herr Stiefel?"

"I'm going to leave home!" I threatened, and went to my room to start the second act of my play. I had changed its title, and now called it: *To Be or Not to Be!* A marvellous phrase, never before used by any writer!

"I won't stay here any longer!" I shouted from my room.

"All right, all right!" Father said. "But stop shouting!"

"It's either he or I!" the woman threatened. "I'm telling you!"

"Do whatever you please! But now I've got to go to the store."

Father couldn't bear shouting. Besides, he had his business worries. The inflation was becoming wilder than ever. Father had married and started his own business, because travelling wasn't profitable any more. In his store he had a few suits, a few dresses, a small stock of drygoods. It was far from being a vast establishment, the shop with the sign: J. FISHMAN, CLOTHING FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY.

Messrs. Linke and Grünfeld

THESE were mad times. The mark was falling, falling into a bottomless abyss. One single dollar was worth a million and then a billion marks. Every German banknote was covered with fantastic rows of figures.

On Sundays we received our weekly allowance.

"Here is half a million," Father would say.

"But the cheapest movie seat is eight hundred thousand marks today," his sons protested.

In times such as those it would have been sheer madness to hold onto one's money, to be stingy. Money was nothing; only merchandise had value. But it was hard to obtain merchandise. Everything had to be paid for in cash, and Yossel Fishman was far from wealthy. He had never had much money. He was only a small Jewish shopkeeper.

After the inflation period, when regular commercial credits of thirty, forty-five, sixty, or ninety days were resumed, people soon forgot that for years they had had to do business on a basis of one-hour credits.

It is doubtful whether Yossel Fishman could have survived these years of devaluation without the assistance of Messrs. Linke and Grünfeld. At all events, no one else helped him. Linke and Grünfeld, the two usurers, were hated by everyone less clever than they at manipulating the astronomical figures of inflation days. To routine minds, to slow-thinking dreamers, to honest little storekeepers, this Linke, who surpassed even the inflation for voracity, was a "ghoul," and Grünfeld a "vulgar, rapacious Eastern Jewish shark."

Grünfeld, the same Grünfeld who in 1920 had presented the Eastern Jewish *schul* with a *torah*, was a Lithuanian, born near Ponieviezh. Yossel Fishman who had also come from the East, but from Galicia (an important difference! Just see what happens if you take a Galician for a Litvak! You'll hear something!) Yossel Fishman called this Grünfeld "a Litvak cut-throat."

Yossel Fishman himself was no cut-throat, no ghoul, no shark. He was a poor, impractical shopkeeper. When the inflation was still in its infancy, he thought he was a made man. All of a sudden he had thousands, hundreds of thousands of marks. Then, to his great surprise, he was a millionaire! Unfortunately, a very poor

millionaire, for one million paper marks was worth less than fifty, and soon less than twenty dollars. And then it took a whole billion to buy one single dollar, but it was officially prohibited to buy dollars. Even billions proved insufficient: in the end, the price of one dollar was 4,200,000,000,000 paper marks. Few could decipher these fantastic figures at a glance. It cost Yossel Fishman the greatest effort. He would have been lost amid these cynical zeroes, these bewildering circular traps, without Grünfeld, the "shark," and his partner Herr Willy Linke.

Of course, Grünfeld did nothing for nothing. Whenever he met anyone for the first time he announced: "I am a serious businessman, not a welfare bureau." His partner Willy Linke, a Gentile from Berlin who during the inflation became the owner of a watch factory, a brewery, a large vegetable farm, and three shoe shops, fitted Grünfeld as neatly as a skeleton key fits the lock of a safe. It would be just as correct to say that Herr Linke was the safe and Herr Grünfeld the skeleton key. One was as good as the other.

Each of the partners had had a varied career. Right up to their break, when Grünfeld shot himself, they retained the astonishing habit of addressing one another by ecclesiastical titles. Both worked at the same gigantic desk. They faced one another across the desk and tossed their correspondence back and forth. Grünfeld would annoy the Protestant Linke by saying: "Here, learned Rabbi, read this!" and Linke would pass his letters to the Jew Grünfeld with the words: "Take a look at this, Your Holiness."

These were mad, delirious times.

According to Zunk, a Protestant and ardent enemy of Catholicism, the inflation was a plot hatched by the Catholic Church to ruin the German people.

Professor Opel held all the Jews responsible—including Yossel Fishman, his sons, his still unborn grandsons, and so forth.

Doctor Grosse explained: "Remember the names of those international Freemasons who are trying to plunge our nation into the deepest misery by means of inflation: President Wilson, the

Frenchman Clemenceau, and the Britisher Lloyd George. Naturally all three are Jews."

Despite these powerful engineers of German misery, despite Yossel Fishman, President Wilson, Clemenceau, and Lloyd George, Messrs. Grünfeld and Linke thrived as never before. Yet they did nothing illegal. They only made use of every opportunity, neglected by others, to obtain foreign exchange—they didn't care for paper money. According to Herr Grünfeld, cleverness should be respected, particularly when it is employed in unfamiliar fields of endeavour; but in no country in the world, he declared, were intelligence, cleverness, personal success held in such disfavour as in Germany. Persons known to be successful were automatically viewed as suspicious characters. It was not an accident that in the Middle Ages the Germans had convicted and burned so many witches and sorcerers. The Middle Ages were not over yet. The Germans were ponderous, just like their sense of humour. Hatred, envy, ill will, and malicious delight at the misfortunes of others were rampant in every town of this technically advanced but humanly backward country. Herr Grünfeld never tired of repeating these opinions to his partner Linke. But Linke didn't give a damn—it was all the same to him. "The main thing is that the inflation shouldn't end too fast," was his only comment.

In order to survive, Yossel Fishman had to work hard. Grünfeld and Linke advanced him funds to buy merchandise. It was they who lent him fabulous quantities of paper for one hour. Yossel Fishman had barely time to get his merchandise from the wholesaler for cash, run back to a waiting customer, and deliver the merchandise against cash payment—in one hour the blindly confident partners had their money back, plus ten percent. It must be admitted that ten percent is a high rate of interest for one hour. And for each succeeding hour or fraction thereof, Fishman had to pay five percent additional. But during those years who would have lent Yossel Fishman millions, billions, and, in the end, even trillions, without charging interest? Many people, it is true, warned

Fishman against dealing with profiteers like Linke and Grünfeld. It is also true that some would have shed tears of compassion if Fishman and his family had died of starvation during that period. Most people were prepared to invest compassion. But Linke and Grünfeld knew no pity. Each, in the depths of his heart, had a great contempt for mankind, because both men knew themselves well. In a sense they were geniuses. They divided all the people they dealt with into debit items and credit items, according to the losses to be written off or the profits to be entered. True, they lent their money by the hour and charged ten percent interest, but after all they incurred a certain amount of risk. Ten percent for one hour—what was that in such times? During the inflation, whole fortunes, everything, including the shirt on one's back, were often lost in a single minute. Every day, at twelve o'clock sharp, the new rate of exchange was officially announced; every day brought a new drop of the mark. Often the mark dropped fifty percent in one day. One minute after twelve, a trillion was no more than half a trillion! In these circumstances was it unfair to charge ten percent interest? And who was Herr Yossel Fishman, anyway? What security could he offer? He had no house, no automobile, only two children, a wife, and a store. Later we shall see what kind of store! The store was a joke, not a security. Thousands of businessmen would have said the firm of J. Fishman deserved no credit at all, not even in paper marks.

Herr Willy Linke had gone through many ups and downs in his life. He had been all sort of things: an insurance agent, a journalist, a private detective, a globe-trotter—and occasionally a prison inmate. Indeed there was scarcely a single form of misfeasance that was unknown to him. He had begun his career soon after the war, in a small way, by founding a "Society for Travelling around the World on Tandems." All the members of that society, after having paid a considerable sum as a contribution, were allowed to see him and his wife mount a tandem and pedal away.

The two prospective world travellers went no further than the next town, where nobody knew them. There Willy calmly sold the tandem, which he had bought on the instalment plan, having made only one payment.

When the inflation began in earnest, Berlin was invaded by a flood of rich foreigners. As a matter of fact, all foreigners who came to Berlin at that time were wealthy. They had foreign exchange. They bought as much food as they pleased, and handsome fur coats, and for the sum of fifty dollars they could buy at auction all the houses on a street. It was then that prosperity began for Willy Linke. This former tramp who had knocked about in many parts of the world before the war was now a made man. He spoke French, English, Spanish, and Italian. He founded a private club, a secret club in his own apartment. At that time a great number of similar "clip joints" sprang up all over Berlin—cafés, dance halls, vice dens, gambling dives, for naïve provincials. Everybody played roulette; there was a blooming trade in narcotics. Linke made fake champagne, practised every form of illegal gambling, and acted occasionally as a fence for stolen goods; his house in Berlin was one of the places where people who could pay for it in foreign exchange came to see certain types of dancing. His wife, Alma Linke, danced every night from two to three. She rode naked astride a hobbyhorse—another of her clever husband's ideas. Alma danced on a huge round table, pretending amid obscene laughter that her hobbyhorse was a real one. Below her, around the table, sat the guests, more or less drunk, their pockets stuffed with valueless paper money, cigarettes hanging from the moist corners of their lips—and these were men whom God had created in His own image.

Before the empty shops, lines of hungry people stretched endlessly—hungry people weak with hunger. And at the garbage dumps, the paupers rummaged with the rats. Never before, except in wartime, had Germany seen so many hungry rats and so many hungry people. But these were days of peace!

It wasn't a question of people unwilling to work, and thus—according to an inhuman though widely accepted tenet—deserving starvation. No, in the Germany of those days workers starved, workers who were working and earning money. And clerks starved, clerks who were working and earning money. And civil servants and shopkeepers starved—all of them working and earning money. But they were earning paper money, and the money wasn't worth anything. The inflation was a gigantic devouring maw, the inflation was insatiable; it lay upon Germany like a thick sheet of blotting paper. Politicians with a love for oratory had plenty to orate about. And the policemen with their trim caps and pretty patent-leather chin straps had plenty to do. In their white-gloved hands they held a dreaded weapon, a weapon that had just made its first appearance—the rubber club with which they battered the heads of men who refused to starve quietly. But their blows filled no stomachs. One empty stomach after another demonstrated. The flags were blood-red. And the masses shouted and sang from dawn to sunset that only the International would save the human race. . . .

It was in such times as those that Linke became a very wealthy man, and acquired a watch factory, a brewery, a string of shoe stores, etc. etc. Alma no longer had to dance. She employed other girls to dance. Many young girls in Berlin were perfectly willing, in exchange for a little bread and butter, to cavort naked on the round table. One day, however, the Linkes learned that the police were on their heels, and they left Berlin with no time to spare. Later, Alma always belittled the affair; "it was only light procuring," she said, "not heavy procuring." In Central Germany Linke met Grünfeld, the Lithuanian, who agreed to go in with him if he would promise to abandon his dubious occupations of the past and become a "serious businessman." As it happened, promises were the one thing that Linke always gave without hesitation.

Grünfeld had been a wealthy man even before the war. He owned a few houses that assured him a sufficient income. As a mat-

ter of fact, he could easily have retired, but he couldn't bear an inactive life. He was an insatiable worker, and idleness was poison to him. He shook his head when he looked at people like Yossel Fishman, people who wasted their time doing humble everyday tasks. Humble, everyday tasks were not to Grünfeld's taste. He shook his head when he inspected Yossel Fishman's store, candidly declaring that he would prefer a gigantic bankruptcy to such a dwarfish little business. Nobody liked Grünfeld, not even himself. No one could talk with him without feeling that the interview was a financial appraisal, with Grünfeld doing his best to discover the weak points in the other's business position. Even so, he was a curiously divided personality. He worshipped his old mother, who lived in Kovno on the considerable sums of money he regularly sent her and who told all her friends and relations that her good Jewish son "lived like a Rothschild" somewhere in Germany and was even married there. Yes, Grünfeld was married. But his wife's inertia and tearfulness were not to his taste, and he was never seen with her. They did not live together. Only on the Sabbath did he call on her and eat Polish carp and "good home-made noodle soup."

Malicious tongues asserted that at the beginning of his career he hadn't known the difference between a banknote and a potato pancake. Maybe so. During the inflation, however, he proved that he knew very well indeed the difference between banknotes, both domestic and foreign, and potato pancakes. He did more than work—he slaved. He signed orders. He cancelled orders. He bought. He sold. For breakfast, lunch, and dinner he ate ticker tape with foreign exchange quotations. Some people said that once he had been a man of sentiment and for a long time had had a mistress, abandoning her finally because she was in the habit of taking her dog to bed with her, and one night the dog had bitten him in the right leg. All that is possible. But in business he was not sentimental. In business there is no place for love or romance

There, only ability and success count. Grünfeld was not a trusting soul. He always felt himself surrounded by enemies; he was always in a state of war. If he had any feeling toward his fellow-beings it was one of suspicion.

However, he somehow had a weakness for Yossel Fishman, even though the Fishmans did originate in Galicia and he in the neighbourhood of Ponieviezh, which is in Lithuania. But the sad story of Yossel's career . . . well, Grünfeld must have been sentimental after all, for he did help Fishman. Naturally this help was strictly on a business basis. Sometimes, it is true, he also gave Fishman free advice without charging interest. For instance, one day he tried to turn Fishman into a big businessman.

"Buy yourself a house, Fishman," he said. "I will lend you ten dollars. You will pay me back after the inflation, and, let's say, you will add five dollars extra. Don't think of those five dollars as interest. They are only, let's say, a present you'll give me to thank me for my good advice."

Yossel Fishman was dumbfounded. Why did this cut-throat, this shark, offer him money without interest? Surely there was some Litvak trap behind the offer! He refused.

"No, what do I need a house for?" he asked distrustfully. "I am saving money for my children. They both have savings accounts."

"Fishman, don't save! Spend all the money you've got! Spend even what you haven't got. I will give you these ten dollars as a gift. Here are ten dollars. Don't tell my partner Willy. Now take this bill and buy yourself a house."

"I don't want a house!" Yossel Fishman cried, pushing back the ten-dollar bill with indignation. "I don't need a house! Why should you want to make me buy a house? Why should I let you make me buy a house?"

"I don't want to make you," Grünfeld said, abandoning his attempt and putting the money back into his pocket. "Go on saving your money, for all I care."

The Woman and the Devil

MILLIONS, billions, trillions . . . !

I often wrote on the Sabbath, at school and in my room. My father's wife regarded this as a sin. Trembling with rage, she said I preferred novel-reading to praying, and this, she declared, was not an ordinary sin, but a mortal sin, a challenge hurled at the Almighty! She cast furtive glances at me. She averted her eyes from me as from a leper—eyes full of disgust, loathing, horror.

She was so preoccupied with me that Herman, at least, was left in peace. Peace? Not really. She overwhelmed him with her noisy love, with her loud tenderness. "You—yes, you are a good boy! But not the devil!"

The devil—that was I.

From my early childhood I was taught that God spread His divine protection over all mankind. Ever since I was conscious of my feelings, I felt love, gratitude, and trust toward this great unknown Lord of my childish life—just as I was taught to feel. With childish fervour I believed in the great impartial judge of the universe.

Today I am unable to say what particular event, when I was in my early teens, destroyed my trusting faith in God. But particular motives are not always essential; at any rate, rebellious thoughts were suddenly there, painful, anguished, contradictory thoughts, and drowning, dominating all others, was the blasphemous thought that must have lurked within me for a long time before: if God really determined my fate, the fate of Jacob Fishman, why did He allow my young mother to die? Why did He allow me to be a "Jewish pig" at school? Why didn't He punish Opel, Zunk, Grosse? Why . . . why . . . why . . . ?

As far as I could look back at that time, I had lived with God, God had been a part of the Fishman family, I had been tied to Him by daily habits, daily feelings, and, as a matter of course, by the

life led by my father and all other Jews. All the Jews I knew believed in God, lived with God, belonged to God, and God belonged to them. Because they were Jews, His chosen people, He belonged to them above all others. Everyone I knew quarrelled with his friends, made up with them, and quarrelled again; only toward God were everyone's feelings unchanging. God must be very strong and influential, if no one ever quarrelled with Him. God must be very powerful, or everybody would not believe in Him. And despite all this, I had the effrontery to tell this most powerful of all my acquaintances that I was dissatisfied with Him, that I would never forget what He had brought upon me, that, above all, I would never forgive Him my father's second wife. And in my early teens I began to think doggedly: Perhaps God is not omnipotent, perhaps there is no God. If He could tolerate all these ideas in me, little Jacob Fishman, then I didn't believe in Him any more. . . .

At first I kept to myself this great, shattering secret. But as the tension in our home increased, I allowed more frequent hints of my feelings to escape me. With wide-eyed horror my father's wife saw a "great sinner" growing up in her presence; she saw my faith dwindling from day to day and threatening to vanish altogether.

That year there were whole weeks when my father and his wife would not address a word to each other. We children were silent, too. This silence at home was torment without hope.

She endured these silences with equanimity. But my impiety filled her with anguish. There's no trifling with God. . . . God is not Yossel Fishman. . . . God is God, the Almighty. . . . God is a terrible avenger! She had to convince God as soon as possible that she was not so depraved as her husband and his older son, that devil. After all, she didn't really belong to this family. She was not at home in this family. She had to sleep in the bed where her husband's first wife had died. Everything in the apartment was still as

it had been at the time of her death. She refused to believe that the furniture had been changed. In the meantime, the voice of the devil grew harsher and harsher. The down on his upper lip was darkening into a sharp menacing shadow. His eyes were black and cold. His laughter was sharp as a dagger. His judgments were hard and cruel. She was afraid—she lived in perpetual anguish. She knew she was not mistaken. It really was the devil. If he were not under the same roof, she would be able to get along with her husband. The devil was responsible for the unhappiness of her marriage. She had to fight the devil. She had to conquer the devil. She fought him on every occasion. The shouting in Fishman's apartment never ceased now. The quarrels between step-mother and step-son now developed into a clash of principles, raging with the intensity of religious wars: it was the struggle against the Evil One—she wanted to crush the Evil One. She felt a cruel satisfaction whenever she cried something vile to his impenetrable face. With the diseased hypersensitivity of the possessed, she suspected him of avoiding her, ignoring her, hiding his inner life from her. (What is he like inside, what is his life? I must know what he is hiding from me, she brooded darkly.) She knew that he was engrossed in his own thoughts, that he despised her, his father's wife. She saw him growing and growing! He was as big as she! No, he was bigger! No, not quite yet! But already he threatened to be bigger than she! No, she didn't want that! She couldn't permit the devil to grow bigger than she! Yes, she hated him! Her hate was a mixture of blindness and perception, courage and cowardice. She wanted to subdue him!

She wanted to exterminate him! She sat outside his door, taking care to remain motionless. She didn't want him to suspect her presence here. She stared at the door, behind which this young devil sat absorbing godless books. . . . Let him hide his papers, she'd find them anyway. . . . She'd rummage through his bed, his closet, his books, she'd find the sheets of paper covered with his writings, she'd read them secretly, trembling, howling with rage,

and then she'd burn them, she'd burn everything that was his, he'd have to leave the house, she wouldn't be happy until then. The devil must go!

I knew of her vigils outside my door; I knew that she tried prayers. She prayed for hours. Her wig jiggled fanatically between her burning ears. Her eyes were feverish. Her pale lips moved like thin ribbons up and down, and the ancient prayers, accompanied by stifled little cries of pain, dropped from her mouth like glowing bits of coal from a stove filled to overflowing. All the words she uttered sounded alike. All the prayers the possessed woman recited, even the prayers of love, had the sinister ring of monotonous imprecations. She was firmly convinced that God was her great ally against the accursed atheist. She warned me that she was the judge, and God her executioner. God would carry out her sentences, she threatened. I must take care, she threatened, for God was waiting only for her sentence.

"I am waiting too!" I cried in a rage. "Why don't you sentence me now?"

She yelled as though suddenly struck because for a long time I listened impassively. At other times she yelled because I did not listen but left the house with a sneer. She whimpered because I doubted her faith, her power. She was still as believing as she had been at the age of four, when she had been told religious stories along with fairy-tales. She still believed in fairy-tales, she believed in fairies, and even more so in sinister women with the power of the evil eye. She still believed all that as though she were still four years old. She dreaded the sinister women with the evil eye, and she dreaded the devil; but God she dreaded and loved at the same time. Her relations with God were powerful and naïve, as though His name in private life were Aaron Wechsler and he were some all-powerful member of her family. She came from Sambor, and if she had been questioned, it might have come to light that to her God was a Jew from Sambor who, it is true, had emigrated to a re-

mote land many, many years ago. . . . With God she could speak Yiddish; God had a Jewish heart, he had a Jewish brain just as the Jews from Sambor had Jewish brains. . . . God, only God understood her. But not the Fishmans!

"Get out of my house!" she cried when I came home.

"You'll be rid of me soon enough," I comforted her. "I'll be clearing out soon."

When I told Father that I intended to leave school, he looked at me blankly and explained that at that moment he had no time to discuss so serious a matter. But he never had time when I wanted to talk about it. Each time I brought it up, he had the same blank look. I suspected that he understood me perfectly, but found my problem too difficult to solve. It did not seem so to me. I wanted my freedom at all costs. I stopped doing my school work. Often I missed school for days, leaving the house in the morning but taking the road to the woods. There lying on the grass, I dreamed of freedom. I couldn't bear to go on seeing that woman, hearing the sound of her voice, breathing the air she breathed. And I could no longer sit on a school bench solving mathematics problems, or listen silently to the anti-Semitic remarks of Opel, the French teacher, or obey Zunk's orders in the gymnastics periods.

The only classes that I was sorry to miss were those of Professor Urban, in German. Professor Urban's eye ailment was growing worse, his glasses grew thicker and thicker, his movements more and more grotesque, but his teaching was still the most alive of all. For me he stood out like a shining star among the other teachers. He was a democrat of the old school, and he bitterly criticized the school authorities who, four years after the proclamation of the Republic, continued to teach according to the methods of Imperial Germany.

"The school authorities," he said one day, for example, "have suggested that you write a composition entitled 'Wars and Storms: a Parallel.' I do not accept this topic, but I want you to hear the sort of thing that the sons of our poor soldiers are expected to write. In

my opinion, they should *not* follow the instructions printed on this paper."

He read it to us:

"The changes of weather have appropriately been compared to human passions. Thus, in particular, we may show that storms and wars have many similarities. The causes that produce these phenomena have the following features in common: gradual accumulation of contradictory, opposing elements; tendency of these elements to balance or destroy each other because of their inability to co-exist, hence the advent of natural storms and wars, among nations, as a struggle for adjustment or destruction. . . . Common features in the actual course of these phenomena: the lightning and thunder in the sky and the thunder of guns, the fluctuating struggle of the hostile elements, now stupendously beautiful, now frightful and horrifying. Common features in their effects and consequences: first remind the student of the few bad or disastrous results—the thunderbolts, the destruction following the storm—the devastation of the war, the ravages caused to fields by marching armies and trampling horses; then call to his attention that the good, salutary effects and consequences largely compensate for the bad ones; cleansing of the atmosphere—clarified relations between the warring powers. After the storm: clear, blue skies. After the war: return of confidence and peace. At the end, the student must be told: just as in nature storms and tempests are oft-recurring phenomena, so in human life passions and wars will exist as long as men remain men. . . ."

"But in my opinion," Professor Urban said in conclusion, "such a development of this topic is obsolete and irresponsible. For me, war is and always will be a great crime which no human being should condone!"

I had always felt attracted to Professor Urban. From him we never heard threats, but only exhortation, encouragement, advice. I was his best student. He often had my compositions read in class. Sometimes he invited me to tea, and when his wife left us alone

he asked me to tell him about my life. It was he who first advised me to write down all my experiences and thoughts. Once I brought my poems to him, all neatly copied in a notebook. After a few days he returned them to me with corrections and observations in red ink. He was my German teacher, after all. Under the last poem he had written the following sentence from La Fontaine: "One must not force one's talent—but nothing can be done against it."

"Thank you very much," I said, and for a long time I tried to understand the meaning of these words. To be on the safe side, I continued writing poetry.

I told Professor Urban my reasons for wanting to leave school, but he didn't quite believe that I would really take such a step. Still, he often admitted that historical dates and book learning were not the most important things in life. What really counted was honesty, precision, and efficiency. At any rate, I was luckier than he. "At least you can think over the idea!" he assured me, laughing. He said that he, too, would be glad to give up school, but unfortunately he was a teacher.

Ten years later he was forced to give up teaching. In 1933. What happened to him then will be told later.

A Game of Cards

THE tension between my father and his wife grew constantly. Father would come home from his shop. He would eat quickly, then leave without having spoken more than a word or two.

He often played cards with his friends Klein, Weiss, and Wolf. All over the world men play cards. In village inns, in railway compartments, in city cafés, in restaurants after meals, at gatherings organized by welfare societies, in apartments of respectable

middle-class people, workers, clerks, unemployed—all over the world men play cards. Why did Yossel Fishman play cards?

His life was unbearable. He was a failure. He had bungled everything, and there was nothing more to be done about it. Fishman was too old, he couldn't begin again now—it is not as easy to begin a new life as it is to open a new book. Twice he tried, and both times he failed. His wasted life was long and sad. There was no telling how it would end. . . .

And so four Eastern Jews sat and played cards.

Fishman shuffled. He shuffled without apprehension. He knew in advance that this game of cards was not going to be a long game like the game of life, and that its outcome did not depend upon blind fate alone. Games of cards were short, one following briskly on the heels of another. And in each of them, reasoning power, skill, concentration, and imagination played their parts. Could anyone say that Yossel Fishman was entirely lacking in these qualities? No, indeed. On the contrary, he possessed them all, and he possessed them because here at the card table he was playing his own game—alone. Yes, alone—that was the important thing! Here there was no wife to shout at him, fill the air with her lamentations, make threats or demands. Here Yossel Fishman was independent. He held his cards in his hands, he saw nothing but his cards, he could lead a card life which was short, but fair and honest. The last game he had lost, but he hadn't minded—maybe he'd win the next time. He had better cards now than before. But in life one's cards never varied—always the same bad hands, never any trumps, never a trick won. In life Fishman was always the loser.

Sometimes Yossel Fishman laughed in the middle of a game, laughed out loud, because he had succeeded in making a good play. He laughed so hard that tears rolled down his beard. And then, in the middle of his laughter, he would suddenly hear himself laugh, and become silent. . . . At home he never laughed. At

home there was a woman with whom he got along best when he did not see her, when he did not hear her. Her fits of rage so alarmed him that sometimes he feared that she was wrong in the head. He wouldn't be surprised if one day she went really mad. Some people are born unlucky, he thought, and I am one of them. My first wife died young, and maybe my second wife is *meshugge*—how can I tell?

"Your deal, Herr Wolf," said Herr Klein.

Maybe she's not *meshugge*, Herr Fishman thought doubtfully. Maybe, she, too, is only unhappy. . . .

"But I just dealt," Herr Wolf protested.

"All right, then I'll deal," Herr Fishman volunteered. He was an amiable man, and hated arguments.

Sometimes while shuffling the cards he also thought of his sons. Then the three other gentlemen would say: "Did you ever hear about the man who fell asleep while he was shuffling?"

"Do you," Yossel Fishman defended himself, "do you want me to shuffle, or don't you want me to shuffle?"

"Yes, yes, but you've shuffled enough!"

And he went on shuffling. . . . School books, writing materials, cost a fortune. But a Jewish father doesn't begrudge his children a good education. Why couldn't his wife work out an understanding with his children, especially with Jacob? But did his children have any better understanding with him, their father?

He had two German sons. It was hard to put up with—for he had remained an Eastern Jew—but his children went to a German school, they had German friends, spoke only German, had German ideas, at which he could only shake his head. But would he want them to be anything else? Then why was he complaining? He wasn't complaining, he was only reflecting. He had done everything he could to enable them to become German. He was still doing it every day. He wanted them to be different from him! Yes, of course that was what he wanted! Then who could say that he was complaining?

On the contrary, he was proud of his children. But he was often ashamed when he thought of them. At such times he would be sad, he would not talk much, he wouldn't answer questions, and nobody knew why. But he knew very well why he was silent. He had children and yet he had no children. They were still young, but he couldn't understand them when they talked about their lives. What would it be like later on? Even now they were always talking about things he had never heard of. The children lived in the same apartment as he, but it often seemed to him that they lived in a different country. He was afraid in advance of the day when they might tell him what they thought of him. They probably thought: We have a father and we have no father. But they never told him anything. Perhaps they thought that he was not intelligent, because he was often unable to understand them and looked at them helplessly and asked questions or didn't even ask questions. They did not know how tired he was, how old he felt, how worried, how hopeless, how lonely, how abandoned; how useless it seemed to him to learn anything, and for that reason how impossible it was to learn anything. Many times he was aghast to notice that he was beginning to forget things—and he forgot first what he had learned last. It seemed to him that he had spoken better German before than now. It seemed to him that never before had he thought so much of his past life as recently. When he saw himself in the mirror he was frightened. It seemed to him that he saw his dead father, old Leib Fishman. . . .

Perhaps everything would be different were his first wife alive. Certainly everything would be different, he told himself. Everything, everything. But Leah was dead. And he? What kind of strange life was he leading in Germany? The older he grew, the more he resembled the old Yossel Fishman of Strody on the Stryj. But it was only a resemblance. He was born in Galicia, but he was no longer a Galician Jew. And yet he had not become a German Herr Fishman. Perhaps he would never be a German, never. It was so hard, so hard. . . . He had tried, but he himself felt that he

had failed. And with such a wife it seemed certain that nothing could succeed. He would never become a *real German*. Had he ever really thought that he could? Ah, for himself he had no more hope. . . .

Sometimes he would have liked to talk things over with his son Jacob, but he was an awkward man, this Yossel Fishman. He was his son's father, but he could not speak as a father to his German son. He could have told his son in Yiddish everything he had on his heart, but then his son would hardly have understood him. And probably he couldn't have told him everything even in Yiddish. Could he have told him that he didn't like his wife, that he had remarried only for the sake of his children? Was it possible to say such things to your son? No, not for him at least. . . . Ah, if only he could really say these things! Could it be a feeling of guilt over his marriage that prevented him from speaking? Was he right in feeling guilty? Was he really guilty? Had he only got what he had asked for—unhappiness, loneliness? Does man make his own life?

"Are you playing or aren't you?" Herr Klein shouted, nervous because Fishman was losing trick after trick.

"Herr Fishman is dreaming," Herr Wolf giggled.

"I always get bad cards," Herr Fishman apologized.

"Your cards are no worse than mine," snickered Herr Haskel Weiss. "You just don't know how to play."

The three gentlemen laughed, and Herr Fishman suffered. He played cards only to forget his life; now it seemed that even in the midst of a game he couldn't forget. He was born to be unhappy. There is no greater cause of suffering than that. Ah, how unhappy he felt! How he suffered!

Still, he felt at home in suffering. . . .

Book 4

HAPPINESS

A Brand-New Life

I WAS sixteen years old when I left home, outwardly as calm as though planning to return that same evening (actually I never returned).

Once again my father's wife screamed that she would kill herself if I stayed in her house any longer.

Oh, I had no fear that she would really do it. How often had I heard her utter that same threat! But this time I began to pack my things in a small cardboard box.

"She'll calm down! Don't you get upset too!" Father protested weakly, and went to his store.

Upset? I, upset? Ha! Not the least bit! Not me! But I went away just the same. Outwardly calm as though planning to return that same evening.

I am not upset, I stubbornly repeated to myself. Why should I be upset? Have I done anything wrong?

I ran through the town with my cardboard box. I resolved to be practical. What should I do and what shouldn't I do? In the first place, I would at once stop going to school. Good. In my pocket tinkled three marks and forty-five pfennigs. Good. That meant I had to look for work and earn some money. I had to look for work right away. I was no longer a poor man's son—I was a poor man myself. Good.

That very day I found a job as a car-washer. Wages: eighteen marks a week. I started at once.

At half-past five my day's work was over. I could go. I was dead tired. But I had no homework to do! I looked for a room. After looking at rooms for an hour, I realized that I couldn't afford one.

My lovely plans! But I wouldn't give in. I continued my search, leaving the town and going out to L—, a working-class suburb. In a little street I saw a sign: BED AND BREAKFAST. The garret stank of old whitewash, dirty linen, and cigarette stubs. But it was really cheap. I rented one of the three beds and fell asleep in it at once. When I awoke next morning I found, to my dismay, that the other two beds were also occupied. I had two roommates! I had not known that such arrangements existed.

As soon as I began to make twenty-one marks a week, I took a room for myself.

Father tried more than once to make me change my mind. I still remember those days when I took my fate in my own hands. . . .

Old Frau Grimm's apartment consisted of two rooms and a kitchen. I was her boarder and occupied one of her two rooms. She lived on my rent and a small income.

She vigorously wiped a chair with her apron, asking her embarrassed visitor to sit down. So he was her boarder's father. No, the young man wasn't in. No, the young man never gave her any cause for complaint. It was none of her business, but it was too bad, wasn't it, that Jacob couldn't get along with his step-mother. The young man hadn't told her all that in so many words, but that was what she had gathered. And the boy was well fixed here, his father could be sure of that. . . .

"He has my Adolf's bed in his room, it's a very nice bed with a real horsehair mattress. My Adolf, when he was alive, could sleep only on horsehair mattresses, for he came of a very good family, yes. You can't imagine how his family opposed his marriage to me! And I serve either boiled potatoes with herring, or lentils with bacon and baked potatoes, or beans and potatoes, or potato soup with meat balls—the young man always gets two meat balls. And every Sunday we have potato salad with pork chops. One for each of us," she added.

So it has come to pork chops! Father thought with horror. I'll have a serious talk with him! I'll take action! I'll bet he's forgotten there's such a thing as Friday evening! He's probably even forgotten that he's a Jew. . . . Herr Fishman looked very worried.

Old Frau Grimm noticed it. "Ah, yes, children give you plenty of trouble," she comforted her visitor. She thought she knew what worried this father. "I could tell you a thing or two myself! All the care I wasted on my daughter! I never bought anything for myself. Everything went to the young lady!"

"Have you many children?"

"Only my daughter. But that's enough, I can assure you! She's a waitress," she said. "A shameful occupation!"

"Why shameful?" inquired Herr Fishman.

"Everybody who orders a glass of beer," Frau Grimm said bitterly, "feels entitled to pinch my Emma's behind!"

"And you allow that?" asked Herr Fishman, aghast.

"What can I do about it? Do your children let you tell them anything? She likes it. Do you know, I always warned my Emma about men. Girls can never be warned enough about men. I said to her: Emma, it's enough that your mother should have had some bad experiences, there's no reason why you should have them too. . . . I said to her: You'll have nothing but bad experiences, Emma. Leave the other sex alone. You'll always get the worst of it. We women are always taken in. . . . But it was no use, she went her own sweet way, straight to the dogs. She wouldn't listen to me. I've had no luck with my daughter."

"And does she live with you?" Yossel Fishman asked anxiously.

"I should say not! She won't do her whoring in my house!" the old woman grumbled. "Just imagine! She wanted to live here, but she didn't want to pay rent! So I kicked her out!"

Herr Fishman was reassured. "You did the right thing," he said approvingly.

It was Sunday. So the place smelled of potato salad and pork

chops. Frau Grimm sat with her unexpected visitor in the kitchen. She told him that she had put aside ten marks to buy Emma a hat and material for a blouse for her birthday.

Herr Fishman inquired anxiously whether Frau Grimm took care that his son didn't catch cold. "He would never listen to me, Frau Grimm."

"Just like my Emma! How I thrashed her when she brought her first boy friend home! I didn't know anything about it till the next morning, when suddenly I found a strange young man in shirt-sleeves having breakfast with her! He paid before he left, but even so!"

Deeply distressed, Yossel Fishman let the flood of words pass over him. He'd have to talk seriously to his son! Shame on you! he'd say to him. . . .

Yossel Fishman was ashamed. He was ashamed for his son. He knew that Jacob had not left his house of his own free will, but did he have to live just here, of all places, and did he really have to eat pork chops? This must stop! He'd say, quite simply: My son, you should be ashamed of yourself and stop all this!

Where was his son? Why wasn't he home? Of course, his father had never visited him before, he couldn't know that his father was waiting for him. Still, he ought to be home on Sunday, a young man shouldn't run around so much. . . . Until now father and son had met occasionally in the grove, of an evening. In a corner where they could be alone, the father looked into the face of his runaway son with hurt pride and sad reproach, and inquired:

"Well? You don't look well. Are you sick? Do you need anything? Why do you go out without an overcoat? Well, how are you?"

"Fine. And you?"

"Well? How should I be?" the father said.

They walked up and down, the father with his hands clasped behind him, his hat pushed back on his head, the son, now taller than his father, with his hands in his pockets

"So you've bought yourself a new pair of pants?" Father said reproachfully. "Why didn't you come to my store?" And then: "Don't you want to come home again?"

"No, Father."

"Why not? Your brother gets along with her. Why can't you? For my sake, Jacob."

"I just can't."

"All right. I suppose if you can't, you can't. But you know what I think of your being a car-washer, don't you?" A small Jewish shopkeeper, this Yossel Fishman. But proud! Proud as the kings of Israel in olden times. "Well, am I right?"

"No, you aren't."

"No?"

"No."

"How can a young Jew have such ideas? Don't you want to go back to school? I'll put you up with a Jewish family. You'll live as well as you lived at my house. It breaks my heart to see how you live! You live like a savage! You live without the Sabbath! Is that a life?" And after a while: "I beg you, go back to school! I'll pay for everything!"

"I don't want to be dependent. I want to be on my own."

"On your own? Is a car-washer on his own? A storekeeper is on his own, and a professor is on his own! When I think of Rothschild and Einstein . . . ! But what does my bright little son do? He washes other people's cars! Does it make sense?"

Then he tried another approach. "If you don't want to go back to school, maybe you'd like to work in Goldstein's store? You know, he has a nice shoe shop in Wilhelmstrasse. I'll talk to him. It's true that he's a German Jew and may refuse to take on the son of an Eastern Jew. But suppose he does take you? It would be a great piece of luck for you, believe me, if he does."

But the son protested that he didn't want to sell shoes, that he had quite different plans.

"And what are your plans?"

The son wouldn't say. He was silent, and his silence deeply offended his father. "I want you to obey me!" he cried.

"In what?" the son inquired. "Just tell me in what I should obey you."

"I want you to be a decent man," Yossel Fishman said evasively, piteously.

He went away, his hands behind his back, his hat pulled down on his neck. An insignificant, timid little man, burdened with cares. A man low in spirit, almost broken—a tormented Eastern Jew, cheated out of his life. . . . But there was no way of helping him. . . . How could I possibly help him? his son wondered, and for a long while there was a lump in his throat. . . .

Such were the occasional meetings in the grove.

On that Sunday, while unknown to me Father was waiting for me in Frau Grinm's kitchen, I went to call on Karl Rascher, the city librarian. We had met at Professor Urban's while I was still a student, and he had asked me to visit him in the library. At first he influenced me only in the choice of my books, but this was to affect the whole course of my life.

He, too, had been a pupil of Professor Urban. He was almost fifteen years older than I, and had married an actress whom he had divorced soon afterward. His former wife lived in Munich, but in spite of their divorce they met regularly in the mountains, where they enjoyed each other's company for half a day, then quarrelled and parted, swearing never to meet again. This happened at least three times a year.

From the very beginning, Karl Rascher treated me like a grown-up. Naturally I looked on him with admiration. Professor Urban had told him about me, he knew my ambitions, he knew that during the day I washed cars, and that at night I busied myself with something quite different.

Again and again the extent of his knowledge amazed me. He

was so much maturer in learning and experience than I, and the ease of his manners, the infallibility of his judgment, his art of handling people were so evident, that like any young hero-worshipper I couldn't help drawing discouraging comparisons between him and my poor self.

At that time I tried to express the character of every person I knew in a short formula—a favourite sport of adolescents.

But according to Rascher I was not very good at it; I needed a great deal of practice.

"I consider you a well-integrated personality," I said.

"Wrong," he answered.

"Then what do you think you are?"

He evaded the question. "Me? I just help circulate books."

"I'm sorry you don't write books."

"I'm too lazy to write books."

"You know so much. I envy you!"

"Anybody learns a lot knocking around. And disappointment in life doesn't make for stupidity."

"I've had disappointments, too," I said darkly.

Someone else might have laughed. But Rascher never made fun of me. He listened. Or else he told me that I was mistaken, and pointed out just how. He was a fine fellow. I couldn't conceal my enthusiasm for him.

"You have a good mind," I said. "You have clear ideas about things. . . ." And as I said that, I thought how different it was with me.

"You're worried?" He encouraged me to tell him what I had on my mind.

There were many things on my mind, I admitted. I was literally bursting. "I'll never get anywhere! You know that I'm a Jew. But you can't know what it means. Besides, I'm the son of an immigrant Eastern Jew. And what *that* means you can't have any idea. It casts a shadow on my whole life. At every step I butt my head

against my own nature. The simplest ideas become distorted and complicated as soon as I think about them," I poured out my sufferings to him.

"That's what thinking is," he declared.

"No, it's my whole life that's at fault," I retorted. "Just one example: even my language isn't quite right."

He didn't understand! Of course not, how could he understand me? Nobody understood me!

"You see! You don't understand me! Everything is so terribly complicated. Now look: what is my mother tongue? The only language in which I am at home is German. But my mother didn't speak German, she spoke Yiddish. Do I speak Yiddish? No! You, like everybody else, speak your mother tongue, the language of your mother. But not I. I am the son of an immigrant. Is that just thinking or is it my life?"

He didn't answer, he only stood up to look at me. What did he see in me? Why didn't he say anything? Why didn't he help me?

"Look me over carefully," I said, offended. "Ladies and gentlemen, here is a man who doesn't even know what country his fatherland is, or what language is his mother tongue! Come in, come in! Don't hesitate! Only a few seats left! Librarians and children pay half-price!" And suddenly I added with despair: "I wish I could become a good German!"

Karl Rascher took me by the arm. "Come," he said, leading me to a bench. "Let's sit down. I want to tell you a story with a moral. Perhaps this story will reassure you. In the year 1768 Carlo Bonaparte, a Corsican patriot, took part in a campaign against the French. But when the French won, Corsica became French and so did the Bonaparte family. It was that simple! Now the Bonapartes are Corsican and—boom!—now they're French! They became very good Frenchmen. Or have you any doubts about it? And the Bonaparte children's mother tongue was not a simple affair. Their son Napoleon learned French only at the age of ten. Was he a bad Frenchman, because French was not his mother tongue?"

"My name is not Napoleon, my name is Jacob Fishman."

"A perfectly good name," Karl Rascher declared. "No one's life is determined by circumstances alone; what you make of them counts, too."

"I am a Jew."

"What of that? Who has displayed more indestructible vitality, more courage, more confidence than the Jews? Where others would have gone down in defeat, the most insignificant and unknown Jews turned the failures of their life into triumphs! You don't have to torment yourself about your mother tongue. In all the languages of the world, bad is bad and good is good. Stupid teachers have put you on the wrong track, my boy! Your fatherland is not necessarily where you happen to be born and where you were persecuted. A man's fatherland is where he is treated like a human being. Here in Germany you are treated like a human being. This is your fatherland! And now everything depends on your own abilities."

At home I hadn't expected to find my father.

"Look! He's always bringing home books! A good boy, my Jacob!" Frau Grimm said proudly. "Take it from me! When my Adolf was as old as our Jacob, Herr Fishman, he had run out on at least three girls. As for books, they never even entered his head. That's why he never made anything of himself."

"Let's go to your room," Father suggested.

I sat on the late Adolf's bed, Father on the only chair.

"I came to bring you your prayer book," he said reproachfully. "No Jew would run away from home the way you did. I just noticed it. You forgot your phylacteries, too."

How we had grown apart! We had almost nothing in common! It was not cowardice that kept my mouth shut at that moment. It was the realization that speaking to Father as "man to man" would have served no purpose whatever. I literally thought: "Man to man." I made an empty gesture of adolescent despair, took

the package and put it away. . . . A Jewish father absorbed in his prayers, every day uttering his pious *Echod*; and his son who during all those weeks had missed neither his prayer book nor his phylacteries, but had missed so many other things. . . . A father who couldn't imagine anyone living without the *Shirhamalaus* and who believed that his son, likewise, needed that song to live. . . .

"I knew right away," Father said, "that you'd forgotten these things in your excitement. But now you'll be able to pray again."

"Thank you," I said, and I had an ugly thought: this man has never known how to manage his own life, and now his only advice to me is to pray—when praying has helped him so little. . . .

"I don't understand how you can live here."

"I'm moving soon. I'm going to stay here only two months longer. Then there'll be a room free in a boarding house where a friend of mine lives."

"Who is this friend?"

"A librarian."

"I am not satisfied with you. You eat pork chops, your landlady told me. How different I always imagined your life would be, Jacob!"

So Father would still like to tell me what I could eat! But I was no longer willing to have anyone tell me what I could and couldn't do. Life had really done everything to alienate father and son. Father's ideas and tastes seemed artificial, strange, unattractive to me. They seemed to come from a time long past and from some unreal world. He had wanted his son to become a German, and at the same time to remain a Jew like himself. He had probably dreamed of a young Yossel and modestly imagined that this young Yossel would become a physician, or at least a dentist, but in any case he would be Doctor Fishman, with more luck than his father and a fine Jewish practice. And his son would speak a German so perfect that all the Jews and especially the German Jews would burst with admiration. Then he would be able to say at least ten times a day: "This is my good Jewish son, the famous doctor (or

dentist) Jacob Fishman. My name is Yossel Fishman and I of course am his father. . . ." And now his son was not pious, and refused to study. He was no doctor and he didn't live among Jews. He washed cars for strangers. . . . "How different I always imagined your life would be!"

And now as I saw the great disappointment in his eyes, I felt clearly how much I loved this helpless man after all. He was no stranger to me. He was my father. A desire came over me, a very sentimental desire. I wanted to embrace my father and say to him: "Father, I love you." But I couldn't do it. He would interpret these words, I knew, as an expression of remorse. He would probably think that from then on I would stop eating pork chops, that I would give way in the end and become an apprentice in Goldstein's shoe store. So I thought it was better to say nothing. I refused to give way. I would live my own life. . . .

"Why do you write so many letters?" he wanted to know. He pointed at the written sheets that lay on my table.

"They aren't letters. It's a story. I want to be a writer."

"My poor boy! Whoever put that idea in your head? What's the matter with you? Are you crazy? Are you a fool? You must be! What do you think you'll live on?"

Father's lamentations annoyed me. I decided to tell him once and for all what my plans were. "I will tell you what I plan to do," I said proudly. "For the time being I'll stay on at the garage. But later I am going to retire and write novels. All the magazines will be fighting for my work."

"Please, don't frighten me," Father sighed, looking at me as though I were a madman. "How about the magazines now?"

"Well, I'm not famous yet," I admitted reluctantly. "But Napoleon wasn't always famous, either." Then I played my trump. "Besides, he didn't learn French until he was ten years old, and even so he became somebody in France."

Father's indignation knew no limits. "Napoleon!" he cried. "Napoleon! What sins have I committed that I should be punished

like this!" he cried. But then he again tried persuasion. "You are a sensible man," he began. "But no, what am I saying? You are not a sensible man! You are still a child. You're only sixteen years old. You'll change your mind."

"I am almost seventeen," I corrected him, offended. "And what I've been through! And what I've suffered!"

"Suffered?" Father looked at me in amazement. "How can my son tell me he has suffered?"

"At any rate I'll prove to you that I am a writer," I said firmly.

"What are you writing? Can you at least tell me this story you've made up?"

"A woman is living on a small pension which she receives on the fifteenth of every month," I recounted proudly. "Each time she gets this money, she pays her debts for the past month, and each time she has just eight marks left. This is enough for the next few days. Then she always goes into debt again until the fifteenth of the next month. She often has to go a long way to buy what she needs, because nobody in the neighbourhood is willing to give her credit."

"And?"

"That is all."

"That is supposed to be a story?"

"Yes," I nodded. "A story from life."

"You are out of your mind!" Father exclaimed. "What have I done to deserve this!"

Perplexed, indignant, unhappy, he went away in the sad knowledge that his eldest son was lost. He'd put Herman in the clothing business right away! One calamity is enough! . . .

"Half of my thoughts, feelings, time is wasted on consideration for others. No more of this!" the lost son wrote in his diary.

Then he wept.

"Please don't lean your head against the wallpaper," Frau Moll said, showing me the room in the attic—it was finally vacant. "Al-

ways use a pillow. A pillowcase can be washed. You see, most of you gentlemen put grease on your hair."

"Not I," I assured her.

To produce the effect of a high coiffure, Frau Moll wore a rat. A tightly fastened hairnet, much too light in colour, kept the whole structure in place. A little chain swung from her pince-nez. It was real gold, she told me right away. And formerly, she explained, she had been a well-known singer in the local theatre.

"But eating comes before art," she said with a deep sigh after this introduction. "For breakfast, there is an extra charge. My breakfast set is very pretty."

"Anything will do for me."

"Some of my boarders have a habit of walking up and down in their room. This makes a terrible noise, the lamps shake, and the ceilings crumble. But I am sure you will be quiet. And here is the bell to ring for the girl. Her name is Erna. She polishes all the floors in the house once a week—did you notice how nicely everything is waxed? That reminds me, did you wipe your shoes on the doormat? Oh, how stupid of me! Of course you did. I'm sorry to say there are some boarders who never think of wiping their feet."

I promised that I would always think of it.

Her colourless eyes looked out vaguely through her round glasses. She had a simpering, hypocritical smile. Her face was caked with powder. Everything about her was false. Only her voice was her own. In her voice there was no artificial padding, as in her coiffure. No light-coloured hairnet held her whisper together. Her mouth had no chain of real gold to keep it closed—unfortunately. Even today, after so many years, whenever I think of this woman, I can hear her shrill voice: "Pappi! Purzel is gone again!"

Purzel, her unkempt dog, had the same vacant eyes as his mistress. Most of the time he lay sleeping in front of the door, but sometimes he ran away, and at such times Frau Moll called despairingly for Pappi to come and help her find him.

Pappi, her husband, had been a comedian before his marriage, but now he led a repressed existence with little to laugh about. In a moment of ill humour, he once told me that his wife had never been a singer. "She was an usher! But don't tell her I told you," he begged anxiously, and he made himself as small as a clown at a children's theatre. "She can't take a joke."

The Molls had won five thousand marks in the lottery, and had started the boarding house with that money. The entire neighbourhood was furious at their luck. The neighbours wouldn't have begrudged anyone else the money. But the Molls! Why, no maid ever stayed with the Molls for more than three months! Why, every girl that worked there got pregnant! When such things happen, the master of the house is always to blame!

Such were the neighbours, and such were the Molls in whose boarding house I went to live after giving up my room at Frau Grimm's.

And it was there that I met Marie. There was an aura of romance about her. She was supposedly the niece of Moll, the former clown; at least that was what she and Herr Moll said, but Frau Moll only laughed. Marie knew nothing about her father; her mother, who had married an Englishman before the war, lived in India and sent Marie some money every month. Marie studied music and played the violin. Every Christmas and Easter, her mother wrote her a letter, and it always said the same thing: that the Englishman was getting very old now, and that after his death she'd get a pension and Marie would be able to come out to Bombay immediately, but not before, for the Englishman had no idea that there was a Marie, and it was better that way, because Englishmen were funny about some things. "Then you'll see, you'll like it very much here. *It is a very beautiful city, my darling.* You'll be seeing it very soon," every letter concluded. But Marie didn't believe her mother—she couldn't even remember her.

As she was on bad terms with her aunt; she took her meals not

at the Molls' table, but at Rascher's. I sat with them. Marie and I, we were the youngest people in the boarding house. Our acquaintance began with timid confessions.

"I love nature," I said.

"I love solitude, too," she said.

"People are so irritating," we said.

"That's life!" I said mysteriously.

"Life can be so boring," she said.

"And so flat; neither happy nor unhappy," I declared.

"Sheer animal existence," she sighed.

"Just look at the people here," I said.

"Oh, the people. Dreadful," she said.

"Say anything you like, children," Rascher grinned placidly.

The people here—I looked them over.

There was the tenor with the triple chin. He was afraid of his wife because at the end of the preceding month he had pawned her fur coat, intending to redeem it when he got his monthly cheque on the first, but on the first the theatre had been unable to pay him his salary and he couldn't redeem the coat. He was particularly worried because the weather had suddenly turned cooler. His wife in the meantime was telling everybody: "You'll be amazed to see what a beautiful fur coat I have! Shall I put it on tomorrow, Enrico? Or shall I wait till Sunday?" Enrico, whose real name was Ernst, made desperate signs to us, and advised his wife to wait awhile. "But I'll take it out of the trunk on Sunday and show it to you," his wife promised us. We all knew that the trunk was empty.

There was Fräulein Patzig, the chemist. Her first name was Augusta and she came from "awfully far away." She was one of those blondes who look as though they eat nothing but lemons. The most striking thing about her was her huge dark horn-rimmed glasses, from behind which she squinted defiantly—though why she should be defiant was a mystery. In a corner of her room this young chemist had set up a small kitchen. She kept her provisions

in chemical flasks, each neatly labelled with the formula for sugar, salt, spirits (she drank because she lived without a man), denatured alcohol, and peroxide (for her hair). Sometimes she drank a cup of peppermint tea as a stimulant in the company of Herr Huster, a writer of a peculiar sort. Herr Huster often borrowed Fräulein Patzig's cigarettes and typewriter. He usually brought the typewriter back a week later (but not the cigarettes), without ever having written anything. Because he had had no ideas, he explained.

"You should write a book about a writer who has no ideas," Rascher once advised him. From that time on, the writer treated him with contempt. Much later Huster was to take quite a different sort of revenge. He hated me too. He thought it presumptuous of me, a car-washer, to meddle with writing at night. He was different—he had studied literature—literature was his profession, even if he had no ideas. But a car-washer—what justification did he have for writing?

And then there was Fräulein Nachtigall, a small darkish woman of indefinite age, the exact antithesis of the thin blond Patzig. She had a job in a bank and was every inch an office worker. She got up at seven o'clock in the morning, even on Sundays. In the evening she knitted tablecloths as presents for her numerous family. Also—this was her other evening occupation—she persecuted Marie and me because she resented our youth. As Marie was Gentile and I was Jewish, Fräulein Nachtigall based her resentment on anti-Semitism, and stopped speaking to me.

And then there was a nurse, a poor creature with bristling woolly hair. Fräulein Beate Stock looked as though she had cried miserably as a child whenever her mother combed her hair. She was hysterical to a degree. From time to time she suddenly burst into tears, and during those crises, which often occurred in the dining room, her nostrils quivered in an awe-inspiring manner. When people attempted to comfort her, she sobbed: "No, please let me cry. It does me good. I am very sick." Later I often met this type of nervous girl whose profession was nursing the sick.

The housemaid Erna, Fräulein Erna, fitted perfectly into our boarding house. She was the first housemaid of the Molls not to become pregnant, and so she stayed with them for years. She sneered when she spoke to the boarders, especially the male ones, and it goes without saying that before her present job she had seen the famous better days. "I even had summer jobs in resorts on the Baltic," she was fond of saying. "But you know, men won't let you alone at places like that. That's why I left." Then she had been a chambermaid with Madame Strauch, the great circus performer. "Ah, she's still crazy about me, you can't imagine! If she ever comes to this town, I'll get all the free tickets I want to her circus!" All in all, Fräulein Erna was a woman of superior tastes. She always told me which movies were worth while. "You absolutely must see the Alpar girl! She has practically nothing on!" Every week Erna fell for another man, but they were all of the same type, with excessively tight suits, excessively bright polo shirts, and excessively pointed bright orange shoes. Her perpetual comment was: "Men are pigs. I know 'em!" Then she would sneer in her familiar fashion.

In this boarding house, then, I met Marie. We were both so young, and so independent.

Sometimes she came to my room with her violin. She played with passion Kreisler's "Liebesleid."

"Splendid!" I said with enthusiasm.

Sometimes I knocked timidly at her door, asking whether she would let me read her some of my writing. She was a great admirer of my poems and stories, and never yawned or interrupted me. When I finished reading, she praised me. Her eyes shone with enthusiasm. "Splendid!" she said.

I saved my money until at last I could buy a bicycle. True, it was an ancient machine, all eaten with rust, without a coaster-brake, but when the chain was abundantly oiled and the pedals vigorously pressed, the wheels turned quite nicely. To restrain this bicycle on a steep downgrade was not so easy. I had to stick a piece of wood between the spokes, and this acted as a brake on the front wheel.

I really should describe my machine in detail—the wheels, the handle bars, and the saddle—every part of this bicycle was pretty funny-looking. The saddle, in particular, was small, much too small for me, for it was a woman's saddle—the whole bicycle was a woman's bicycle. But I didn't care. Neither did Marie.

We used to ride out, far out, into the country. To find the nature that I loved so much. And the solitude that she loved so much. So as not to see any of the people whom we both found so unbearable.

I felt very strong—particularly when I walked pushing the bicycle along beside me. I felt as strong as a medieval knight leading his horse by the bridle while his beloved lady rode beside him on a splendid white steed. Marie's bicycle was marvellous. It was a new bicycle. The shining coat of a steed was as mud in comparison. And Marie herself was beautiful. When I looked at her, and particularly when she looked at me, I felt myself growing very strong, like a knight in the Middle Ages. I would gladly have protected my beautiful damsel from anyone. But nobody attacked her.

Instead I had to polish and oil her bicycle, put the chain on, mend the tires. I was happy whenever her bicycle required attention.

I had no time left now for other people.

I was a handy man, an unskilled worker, a car-washer. I washed cars to earn money, to live. It was not my intention to wash cars all my life. I firmly believed that my real tool was my pen and not my pail and sponge. I desired to write and earn money by writing. I wrote a great deal. But there was one thing which I hadn't taken into account. Nobody printed what I wrote.

During adolescence most men are poets. A child in the process of growing up doesn't willingly accept the real world. The need for new experiences is curiously blended with the desire to evade this world of ours, so real but so ugly. The mood produced by this inner conflict is most favourable to poetry.

I was proud because I wrote poems, and unhappy because no-

body printed them. Everything I sent out was returned. I wrote almost every day. My work had a youthful exuberance, my output was large. Evenings I came home filthy and sweaty. I stood naked in front of my wash-stand, and sloshed the soapy water over myself from head to foot. I dried myself, wiped the floor, passed the comb through my dripping hair, dressed hastily, and ate hastily. Then I wrote until one o'clock without interruption. I had no money for amusements. Every penny I could spare went for the postage on my manuscripts. But when Karl Rascher asked me to read my latest works, I explained that I hadn't written anything for a long time. An unsuccessful poet, I thought, was as ridiculous as a parrot that keeps opening its beak but can never say anything.

"You'll never find yourself in print," Rascher cautioned me, "if you stop writing. Do you want to be like Huster?" And he added casually: "Even if you get three rejection slips a day, you mustn't lose courage."

"So you know about it," I said with embarrassment. "I wanted . . . well, I intended . . ."

"You must persevere. You're on the right track. If you give up now, all your past effort will have been wasted."

I didn't give up. I couldn't give up—even if I had wanted to.

And yet it was hard, really hard. I could bear my daily work in the garage, and later in the factories, and still later in the Chemical Works, Inc., only because during all those years I kept observing my own life and the life of other people. I observed my fellow-workers and my big or petty bosses, their work and their character. I worked, so I persuaded myself, only to write down in the evening what I had experienced and observed during the day. . . .

But nothing was printed. Publishers and editors rejected my manuscripts and their rejections were accompanied by expressions of profound regret. "Lack of space" and "abundance of material" were two phrases which, at that time, pursued me even into my dreams. But I didn't allow myself to be discouraged. Marie com-

forted me. She offered to keep part of my manuscripts in her room because mine was getting smaller and smaller. I do not consider writing a mere occupation, a trade. For me, writing is a vital need, like eating and drinking and sleeping and dreaming. I was, it is true, distressed at having to wait so long for success. But I was never discontented, never embittered. I believed in the lack of space and abundance of material. I waited. At that time I was not acquainted with any publisher or editor, and it was perhaps better so. I communicated with them by mail and they rejected my manuscripts by mail. But what did it matter? I was like a shipwrecked man, and my writing at night was like an island of promise toward which I swam obstinately and tenaciously with vigorous, assured strokes that constantly grew more vigorous and more assured.

I had almost forgotten to mention that I wrote under various pseudonyms.

As J. Fishel.

And as J. Fish.

And as J. Fish-Fishel.

These three pseudonyms I thought very original, very.

And very striking.

Moreover, I used to send my manuscripts in vivid green envelopes. Not the ordinary square envelopes used in Germany, but oblong ones. They were very impressive envelopes.

In spite of all this, my writings were never printed.

The Policeman's Wife

A FEW weeks before, a great change had come over Louis Liebig. She had suddenly seen herself as clearly as though she were a stranger. "Louise, you are poor. You will soon be fifty, and what

have you got out of life? Every time you've had a bit of fun, you've been terrified that next day you might have to pay for it. You want to be really happy for once."

She couldn't understand herself. After all, she wasn't young any more, but what could she do? Her heart still beat so warmly.

Recently she had had terrible pains in the back, and then she was seized with an overpowering craving for sweets. She could not pass by a shop window displaying chocolate. The supply of sugar and jam in her kitchen dwindled rapidly. A considerable part of her not excessive housekeeping allowance was spent on cakes, cream-puffs, pralines, candy, ice cream, and whipped cream. Her husband was surprised at the increasingly poor meals she cooked for him, but he said nothing. Louise was silent on the subject too. Just imagine—for years and years a woman lives a very ordinary everyday life, and then all of a sudden—! To her craving for sweets was soon added an overwhelming desire for sharp, pungent foods. Louise swallowed pounds of pickles, Bismarck herring, smoked salmon, sauerkraut, and tomatoes, these last abundantly salted and peppered, and she didn't stop eating even when her gluttony made her sick. She used every conceivable subterfuge to try to hide this wild hunger for sweet and sour alike. What would happen if her policeman husband caught her at it? But what could she do? She was the victim of her strange desires.

Sometimes, even in broad daylight, she caught herself dreaming that the door opened and a big, handsome lad named Ewaldchen, with the smell of a bakery about him, rushed in, attacked her, and then went out again, taking all her money for good measure. . . . She was unhappy about these dreams, and reproached herself for being a lost woman. "If I go on like this," she thought, "I'll come to a bad end."

Before meeting her husband she had been a housemaid, and had spent her days getting breakfast, cleaning, cooking, and washing clothes, not to mention sewing and ironing, looking after the children and polishing the shoes. She had to say "Madam," and an-

swer to the name of "Martha" because her predecessor's name had been Martha, she had to deduct from her wages the cost of any dishes she broke and any tablecloths she burned, and as a despised scullion she was allowed no privacy. One morning her "Madam" discovered with indignation that Martha had not come home the night before. At the same time a purse containing money was missing—this purse was later found behind the employer's wardrobe. Scolded by her mistress, Martha tearfully gave notice, saying that she would leave on the first of the next month. Soon after, she married her fiancé Robert, who had known her by her real name of Louise. She had never been with a man before. The only night that she had not slept in her employer's house had been spent, not with her fiancé, but with a girl cousin of hers in a nearby village, because she had missed the last train home. In her resentment and anger, she had not taken the trouble to explain her night's absence. She was fed up with her job anyway, and wanted to get married. And so she became Robert's wife.

It cannot be said that she was excessively spoiled by her husband. Not only was the policeman frequently absent on night duty, but he kept away from her for other reasons as well. After a few years it became evident that their marriage would remain childless. As Louise was much too shy to consult a doctor on this intimate problem, it was never ascertained which of the two was to blame. For the policeman, too, was shy in these matters, and could never bring himself to seek a doctor's advice. Then the war came along and left him less of a man than ever.

During the war there had been the affair with the baker's apprentice—an incident that had always been kept from Liebig, then in the infantry. Louise had "almost forgotten" her little affair with Ewaldchen. Ewald, who in the meantime had become a baker and a married man, had also forgotten it. But Herman Kupke, who had just been released from jail, had forgotten nothing.

And one day evil took its course.

Louise had a secret bank account. Like many other women, Louise put aside as much as she could against the day when her husband would be retired on a paltry pension. She liked to picture Robert's surprise—he'd never in the world be able to hide it—when some day, now not far distant, she would suddenly bring out a nice little sum of money, the existence of which he had never suspected. So far she had saved eight hundred marks toward her old age, and it had not been easy on her housekeeping budget. Instead of butter she often used margarine—without Robert's ever noticing it. When she discovered a store that gave worthwhile coupons, she hadn't the slightest hesitation in abandoning the grocer who had served her for years. She had no children, no cats, no dogs. But she had a collection of coupons in seven different colours from seven different stores. She devoted much time and care to the little slips of paper, and classified them according to their value, colour, and place of issue. And when, at Christmas time, these stores distributed to their customers the money which was actually the customers' own money, lent to the stores without interest, Louise rushed to the City Savings Bank and joyfully made her deposit.

But this time it was different. She didn't mean to, but she did it just the same. She withdrew money! A hundred marks! And with this money she went to a shoe store, to Goldstein's in Wilhelmstrasse.

"Can I help you?"

What was it that she wanted to buy? What had brought her to the shoe store? She had more shoes than she needed.

"I would like a pair of low shoes."

"What size do you wear?"

"Size 9."

"Have you any special style in mind?"

"I would like something in patent-leather shoes with very high heels," Louise chirped like a schoolgirl, and she felt terribly ashamed.

Herr Goldstein brought out two models. Louise chose the one with the higher heels. Herr Goldstein advised against them. "You'll find it hard to walk on those heels," he cautioned her.

"Oh, no, it won't be hard for me!" She was almost crying. "I also want a pair of silk stockings!" She had never worn silk stockings in her life.

She didn't tell her husband about her purchases. And she didn't tell him how she had been spending her afternoons recently.

At two o'clock sharp she left her apartment in Castle Street. She always knew in what part of the city her husband had his beat, and she always went in another direction. She wore her best Sunday dress and the handsome fur piece that Robert had given her for their twentieth wedding anniversary. And, naturally, the new patent-leather shoes and silk stockings. The shoes were dreadfully uncomfortable, but for nothing in the world would she have given them up. She didn't know why, but she felt that in these shoes and silk stockings she might walk into the happiness she had missed for so long. She began to have the craziest ideas.

She went directly to Frick's pastry shop. She ordered mountains of cake, and, quick as lightning, devoured one portion after another. She ordered chocolate, and drank it down without taking the time to stir it. She saw a woman making up her face, and she jumped up, paid, ran to Hohenzollernstrasse, found a beauty shop, and bought a lipstick. Never before had poor, dowdy, German Louise owned a lipstick!

Then she went to a ladies' room. She took a cubicle, the expensive kind with a wash-basin and a mirror. With pounding heart, she made sure that the door was bolted. Then, for the first time in her life, she painted her pale lips. Drops of sweat stood out on her forehead; her fingers were moist and trembling.

She looked at the double red smear.

It was grotesque.

Louise began to weep bitter tears. With the back of her hands she wiped the paint from her quivering mouth. Then she threw

the lipstick into the waste basket that stood by the door. But she picked it out again, went home, got into bed, and cried.

The next few days Louise's search for happiness was continued with slight variations. After an hour in the pastry shop, she went to a movie. Robert had no suspicion of his wife's curious behaviour. He supposed that she was at home, presumably asleep or reading a long serial novel, *The Secret of the Beautiful Countess*, in five hundred instalments.

In the pastry shop, Louise had noticed how young women looked at men nowadays. She saw them make eyes at them, letting one eyelid droop, and raising the other eyebrow. If anyone had suggested to her a month before that she do such things, she would probably have fainted. But one day she actually made eyes at a man just that way! The result was not very encouraging: the man burst into a loud laugh, and Louise thought it best to leave the shop in haste. She fled into a movie theatre and found a welcome in its comfortable darkness. This time the movie really helped to quiet her. It was an educational programme: *How Beer Bottles Are Made*, *The German Uniform down the Ages*, and *To the Memory of Our Navy*. Louise had not looked at the programme before entering the theatre.

But today she was more careful. She began by making her third withdrawal from the savings bank. Then she went to a pastry shop on the west side of town because Robert was on duty in the east. She bought a ticket and went into a movie theatre without noticing that a man was following her. The man bought a ticket too, and sat down at Louise's side.

It was dark in the theatre. With a sigh of relief she pulled her uncomfortable new shoes off her swollen feet. The picture began—an operetta. An army officer strolling along a bridle-path. A girl, also strolling. Approaching them, a sinister horseman. "Ah, the sinister horseman!" the officer began to sing. The girl warbled in reply: "I am afraid, so terribly afraid! This forbidding rider, alas, he is my fiancé!" she sings. "My fia—my fiancé-é-é, my fiancé!"

"You've dropped your bag," a voice breathed in Louise's ear. Beer and pipe tobacco. . . . Louise awoke from her trance. Oh, the officer was so handsome!

"Are you enjoying the picture?" the voice near her inquired.

Now Louise became aware that the stranger at her side had put her bag on her lap. As she was about to grasp it, she felt a man's hand. This took her breath away. But she couldn't withdraw her hand. It was clasped in strong, insistent fingers. Louise struggled as a drowning woman might fight the engulfing waves. That is, she would have been glad to muster up her strength for the struggle. But her strength failed her. She drowned. Her arm weakened and gave way. Her weary legs sprawled apart. Between her legs, in the hollow formed by her silk dress, lay the bag, and on it lay her hand, which was being stroked by a complete stranger. A man! . . . Her heart pounded almost to bursting. Was she awake or dreaming? Her eyes grew wide; curiosity as well as fear filled her, but all she could see was the outline of a man's head beside her. It made her flesh creep. She leaned against the padded back of her seat. The simple idea of crying out for help did not occur to her. She felt her blood coursing through her entire body.

"In the end the officer will marry the girl," her neighbour whispered.

This brought Louise back to herself. "Sh! I don't want you to tell me the end!"

"The sinister horseman is going to fall and break his neck," the man laughed.

"Be quiet, or I'll call for help!" Louise threatened, but she didn't withdraw her hand.

"Come now, be a good girl," the voice said, and the strong fingers increased their pressure.

Louise made no answer. She gave up the struggle.

A voice behind her grumbled: "Quiet, you in front!"

Now Louise felt a bond with the stranger. They were both disturbers of the peace. . . .

On the screen: an evening scene. Rustling oaks. A wind over the fields. An early spring moon in a frosty sky, climbing like a ghost over the old oaks. Rustling oaks. A wind over the fields. Chirping crickets. The officer and the girl embrace. The moon hides behind a cloud. The landscape darkens. A hand caresses Louise. Oh! The moon rolls farther behind the clouds. Louise would like to be able to tear herself away, jump up, flee this yawning danger, but her legs refuse, she can only sit still. And perhaps Louise wants to stay. She feels the strong knuckles of a man's hand, she feels hands, she is held tight, embraced, the moon slips behind young birches, the officer and the girl sit down on a tree trunk lying in the meadow, dark junipers sway in the wind, the officer whispers tenderly: "For ever! . . ." The girl sings: "My fi-an-cé, my fi-an-cé, my fia-fiancé!" And the film—ah—is over. . . .

The man beside Louise was Kupke!

Louise was as though stricken with paralysis. She dared not move. She dared not snatch her bag from his hand. She looked on helplessly as he opened the bag, turned the pages of her bank book, examined her small purse, all the while smiling at her so that the people around them might think they were together.

"Give me your hand." Kupke showed his large yellow teeth. "You can call me Robert if you'd like to," he laughed nastily. "Or Ewaldchen! Do you remember the baker's boy? Would you like me to tell your husband about him? I've been following you for a whole week. Should I tell him what you do every afternoon? I learned a lot on my long vacation!"

Louise was still sitting on a tree trunk. The moon had gone. Crickets were chirping. Louise closed her eyes in fright. The world was ugly. Happiness was an illusion. Only the movies were beautiful. . . . If only it were all a dream!

"Come on, let's go!"

They went. Out in Kaiserstrasse it was daylight again. There

was no darkness. No trees. No crickets. No officer. What did this jailbird want of her? Louise tore away from him, turned quickly, and began running toward Hohenzollernstrasse.

Ah, how hard it was to run! Her feet were pinched in her patent-leather shoes. She was a married woman. Take care, Louise, watch out for this jailbird Kupke!

Who could have supposed that this panting, elderly woman was involved in a love affair, even a ridiculous love affair! Louise looked like a woman from whose body every trace of passion had long since vanished.

Kupke quickly caught up with her. "Go home now," he said generously, in the tone of a merciful huntsman. "But tomorrow I want you to come to my place. You know where I live. Be there at three o'clock."

Hohenzollernstrasse was full of people. For a single moment Louise felt the desire—a genuine, serious desire—to cry for help.

"I won't come!" she cried.

"Don't kid me! Either you come or I'll talk to Robert!"

"I won't come," Louise whined. Then she ran toward a street-car and stepped into it.

In the streetcar she let herself go. Her tears streamed down her sunken cheeks.

"Mamma, look, there's a big lady crying," a child said.

"Behave yourself," said the child's mother, embarrassed.

Louise tried to fight back her tears with a smile that was intended to be gay, but she failed completely. In her fine attire and with her contorted face, she looked like those old women who like to take part in the funeral processions of people they don't know, and cry hot tears over strangers' graves.

At home, she first hid her shoes and her silk stockings, she hung up her black Sunday dress, she locked up her foxes in the box filled with moth balls, she put her hat away, and didn't forget to hide her bank book. Her purse was empty, she found, except for a few small coins.

Crying bitterly, she threw herself on her bed. She suddenly felt great fear. Fear of the happiness she had sought and fear of Robert, who perhaps had seen her with the jailbird.

"Ah, what shall I tell him?" she sighed. "Ah, my God! Suppose he asks questions! And he's a policeman!"

All women in fear of a scene with their husbands seek shelter in bed. They close their eyes and are no longer there. They are sick, they have several things wrong with them at once: headaches, fatigue, coated tongue, buzzing in the ears, palpitations, dizziness; often they have an alarming hacking cough.

Louise was in that condition as she waited for her husband Robert.

This Robert, so at least everyone thought, was no great intellect. For months his wife Louise had had a lover (and what a lover!), but he didn't seem to notice anything. As in all true stories, the whole house knew about it, but apparently the husband didn't. Robert's duties kept him busy for long hours every day on the west side of town, and while on duty he was observant, cautious, efficient. But Castle Street was on the east side, and here he was blind and deaf, here he came to rest, not to keep his eyes open. This satisfied his wife completely. At least, that was what everybody said.

Poor Louise Liebig! For her, this was no brief, passing adventure. For her, even though her lover was Kupke, this was "her life's great love." At a time of life when most people have lost their illusions and are looking for peace, not agitation, Louise had suddenly been afflicted with desire. Resistance was impossible; she was defenceless. Even if Kupke had been a murderer, she couldn't have resisted him. The longing that had seized her so late in life proved stronger than all reason. And so she fell into Kupke's hands—this Kupke who had come out of prison slyer than he had gone in. But he did not get her money for nothing. He sweated for it—sweated for fear, that is. Wasn't her husband

a policeman? And Louise was exigent in her late-flowering passion.

"I am sorry for poor Kupke," she said to her husband.

"A jailbird," Robert said, and went on reading his paper.

"But he's trying so hard to go straight."

"It's high time."

He didn't notice anything, the policeman. Didn't he really?

Fishman's Store

HE wasn't getting rich, but still, thanks to his little store, he was able to make both ends meet. This surely was quite an accomplishment, considering Yossel Fishman's store, his customers, and himself. Especially to those who have never tried to sell anything Fishman's commercial career may well seem like a fairy-tale, a slightly comic fairy-tale.

We know that he survived the inflation. Then came prosperity, a marvellous time with stable prices, with a mark that was worth a hundred pfennigs and didn't have to be calculated in relation to the dollar. All in all it was wonderful to be able to forget little by little about the billions and the trillions, to drop all the zeroes and figure with plain solid numbers, "like before the war." A peaceful existence seemed assured. So prosperity was here at last, Yossel Fishman smirked with satisfaction. After all there is a Jewish God. What had gone before was only a bad dream. You should never give up hope. . . .

His weekly turnover fluctuated between two and three hundred marks, to quote concrete figures. Just before holidays, the volume was even slightly higher, though of course it decreased the week after a holiday, so that it never really exceeded three hundred marks. Naturally he had no employees; he did everything himself. There wasn't much to do, anyway.

What income did "Y. Fishman, Clothing for the Whole Family" bring in? After deduction of rent and taxes, the remainder was equal to a workman's wages. Yossel Fishman was not dissatisfied, not a bit. He was even happy. Yes, he was happy. For the first time in many, many years he was really happy. He made peace with his second wife. After all, they were married and belonged to each other. His son Herman still lived with them, but now he worked all day at his job in Max Kahn's department store and was rarely at home in the evening. Yossel Fishman and his wife spent most evenings sitting at home. Fortunately they had nothing to say to each other—at one time they had had so many things to say!—and they played cards. Sometimes she won, sometimes he won; sometimes they quarrelled over a badly played trick, sometimes they laughed over a badly played trick. Then they went to bed because they were tired and because they had to be careful about the gas bill. Before long they would have electricity. The wires had been installed for months, but there was still a disagreement with the landlord as to who should pay for the light on the landing. They never went to bed late. Tomorrow was another day. Good night. . . .

And every morning, except for the Sabbath, Yossel Fishman went to his store. And he supposed that he would always go to his store, all his life, every morning, except for the Sabbath. He had suffered insecurity long enough. He had prayed to God daily, prayers of entreaty, and finally God had listened to him. Times had improved; there was no doubt about it. Herr S. Klein and N. Wolf and H. Weiss were of exactly the same opinion. They all said that now at last a better, more peaceful life was ahead. Like Yossel Fishman, all of them had always worked hard and had really suffered, trembled, prayed, and hoped. And now they were honestly convinced that their sufferings were at an end and that a happier time had begun in Germany for everyone who lived there.

That was exactly Yossel Fishman's opinion. He had a very simple way of forming what might be called his philosophy of

life: whoever spoke to him convincingly convinced him. "What interests me is facts," he always said. After all the hard years he never thought of retaining his sceptical outlook. At any rate, he didn't want to. He had been sceptical long enough; that was probably why he was so weary now, why he avoided any "ifs," and "buts." Prosperity was a fact. His store brought him enough to live on; that was a fact too. The present spoke a convincing language, he believed in it, he believed it would last for ever. For he liked to believe that conditions which were pleasant and soothing were also everlasting.

Yossel Fishman now often spoke about himself, about his luck ("Heaven shield us from harm!") and, above all, about his son Herman.

Herman was a young man now. He was proud of having to shave. All his friends were proud of having to shave, and they all expected to be admired for their nascent moustaches.

Herman had a girl friend. He took her for walks, he kissed her, and she kissed him. She was a salesgirl or a stenographer, and she insisted above all that her friend's trousers be perfectly creased and that his shoulders be well padded. In the newspaper, Herman read the sports section, the weather forecast, the "entertainments, balls, and other events of the coming week," the crossword puzzles, the serial novel if it was exciting and dealt with love, and also the "help wanted" advertisements. He was no better, no worse, and no more superficial than many other young people, than young Müller in Berlin, young Dupont in Paris, young Smith in London, young Jones in New York. He liked to dance, and he danced well. He owned two suits and ten handsome neckties. Every Sunday he went to a dance, and sometimes he stayed out all night.

Herman spoke a pure German with a Saxon accent. He had grown up in Germany, and nobody could suspect that, like his father, he was born in Strody on the river Stryj. He didn't look like an Eastern Jew, nor did his gestures betray his origin.

He was the son of a homeless Jew, grown up in a new home. Immigrant fathers are always proud when their children become assimilated. It is hard to describe that pride. It has its roots both in fear and in joy. It is a source of deep happiness. It marks the realization of a dream. But a dream is realized only in the children, and therefore the pride is mixed with a tinge of envy and regret. Yet there is much, much joy in it.

Yossel Fishman still tried to speak a correct German. But he had never had complete success. He was aware of this, and people who heard him speak were even more aware of it. Every time he came to the end of a German sentence, he nearly broke out in a sweat. When he became entangled in a difficult phrase, he would say in a despairing yet very happy voice: "You should hear my Herman! His German is perfect!" Yes, Herman was a great joy to him, this son who was a *real German*, and he would have an easier life than his father had had. Life is rich in illusions. Had not Yossel's mother, old Malka Fishman, once dreamed the same dreams about her son Yossel in Strody? . . .

Herman had been graduated from business school. Neither he nor his father had dreamed of his attending any other kind of school. It seemed only natural to both of them; furthermore, when he got a job in Max Kahn's department store, Herman's career was easily determined. "Well, I suppose you'll go into business." That was the end of it, he became a salesman. He never had any ideas about himself. He had no concern for the future. He had no particular ambition, and therefore accepted all that was required of him. No problems burdened his temperament. Like most other employees of the department store, he enjoyed strenuous forms of relaxation from time to time; his life didn't seem bad to him. In the evening, when he went over his salesbook and found that his day's total was high, he was happy. He received his salary on the first of each month, and on the twentieth he usually asked for an advance. All the employees of Max Kahn's department store, Jew and Gentile alike, led almost identical lives.

A young, inconspicuous Jew living as one of the obscure millions, with a small position and a small salary—that was Herman; and Yossel Fishman was more than satisfied with him.

Now Yossel Fishman often made comparisons and told his younger son of what life had been twenty years before.

"You're going to be a good German businessman, my Herman, and I am glad for you. A real businessman. No one persecutes you or mistreats you in any way. Now, back home, in Galicia . . ."

Herman wasn't much interested in Galicia.

But his father was interested in everything that concerned his son.

"What do you do all day in your department store?" he wanted to know. He said "your department store," as if the firm employing his son was named HERMAN FISHMAN'S DEPARTMENT STORE. He inquired: "Do you have good customers? Do they pay cash? Or do they sign notes? No? You ought to be glad not to have to bother with notes. You are satisfied, aren't you? Are you specializing in any branch of your business?"

As Yossel Fishman had never worked in a department store, his questions were sometimes quite astonishing.

"I like waiting on ladies best of all," Herman laughed.

"I'm glad you enjoy your work," Yossel said. That was how he interpreted Herman's laughter. "And so what do you do all day? Tell me a little about it. I would like to know."

"I measure material," Herman told him. "I cut it and I tear it."

"And what do you say to your ladies after you've sold them your material? Do you say something friendly in a big store like yours?"

"I say: 'Can I show you anything else, Madam?'"

"Oi! He says: 'Madam!' What a man! Things are really better here in Germany than in Galicia."

"What do you mean?"

"Why! You have no worries, you have a position for life in the best store in town! What would you have done in Strody? You

would have peddled old clothes or old furniture or nails and wire or herrings or herring barrels. But here you're somebody. You're a fine, respectable man! And—Heaven shield us from harm—you're fixed for life!"

Then Herman became head sales clerk in the "Fashionable Dress Goods Department." Head sales clerk! This was an event for Father. His son's salary was now a hundred and fifty-five marks a month! And he also received a commission amounting to one-twentieth of one percent of his sales!

"Good morning, Herr Wolf," said Herr Fishman, unable to hide his joy.

"Good morning, Herr Fishman," said Herr Wolf. He had known for quite some time that Yossel's son was head sales clerk, but he took good care not to let Father know that he knew it.

Herr Fishman needed no encouragement. "My son Herman," he burst out, "is now in *couture*."

"He's in what?" Herr Wolf pretended not to know.

"In *couture*! You don't know what *couture* means? He works in the fashion department!"

"Is that all you've got to tell me?" said Herr Wolf. "I expected to hear something unusual. Why, my own father, in Kiev, was a tailor."

"Hah! A tailor!" Herr Fishman laughed, half offended. "My Herman is no tailor. He lets others do the tailoring! He gives the tailors ideas! All he needs is good taste! And that's what he's got! That's his profession."

"Since when do people live on taste?" snapped Herr Wolf. "I have taste too, but can I live on it?"

"Of course," admitted Herr Fishman. "I have taste too, maybe. But we're not modern. My Herman has a modern German taste! And that's not so easy. All the fine ladies in town come to his department store and say to him: My dear Herr Fishman, what are they wearing in Paris now? the fine ladies say. . . . And my

son answers without a moment's hesitation: Madam—listen carefully, Herr Wolf!—and so he says: Madam, they're wearing Chinese prints. I recommend very strongly our dresses of satin imprimé, large patterns, black background with coloured flowers and ciré, and our coats of ciré tulle, falling in thick folds. . . ."

Herr Wolf opened his mouth in amazement. "What are those words?" he asked, confused.

"I was just telling you," Herr Fishman said. "I was just telling you what a clever son I have."

"And how much does he make?" Herr Wolf wanted very much to know. He felt a momentary uneasiness about his own two sons. Maybe it had been foolish to let them go to the university. Wouldn't it have been better to put one of them in Max Kahn's department store? Herr Wolf was a poor pedlar, travelling with his heavy cases from village to village, from farm to farm. He sold drygoods and dresses and suits and shoes to the servants and farm hands. It was hard work. Often when he went to the barn to look for his customers, he found that they had just gone to the field, which was half an hour away. And when at last he reached the field he found that they had just gone back to the village by another road, and Herr Wolf had to drag himself and his cases back to the barn again. At home he and his wife ate plain bread and drank buttermilk so that their children might be able to get on. Some day the children would be better off than their father. Some day one of them would be a doctor and the other a lawyer. And they would both be more talked of than any doctor or lawyer had ever been talked of before—there was no doubt about that. They both had Jewish brains. They studied hard, but in the meantime they were a considerable drain on their father's purse. And here was this mere business-school graduate, Herman Fishman, earning a princely salary. "So what does he make, your son?"

"Enough to live on," said Herr Fishman evasively.

Naturally Herr Wolf couldn't allow Herr Fishman to leave the field with all the honours.

"My sons write me regularly from their universities," he said, puffing up like a turkey. The two fathers had been speaking Yiddish, but now Herr Wolf went into German. "I get letters from my son the doctor, and I get letters from my son the lawyer. From their universities." He was almost choking with pride. Actually the "doctor" had a long way to go before becoming a doctor, and the "lawyer" before becoming a lawyer.

"Your sons are model children," Herr Fishman said politely.

"They are very capable," Herr Wolf modestly admitted. "My son the lawyer already has a position with an attorney."

"And what does he do there, if I may ask?"

"He has charge of the files. He earns a nice salary. And he hasn't got his diploma yet. He costs plenty of money, plenty. But it's all for a purpose. The attorney is very satisfied with him. And he's the greatest attorney in all Berlin!"

"That's lucky for your son."

"Well, the attorney is lucky too! I'm sure that later he'll take my son in as his partner, otherwise the boy might not be willing to stay! My son has already made thousands of marks!"

"Thousands?" Herr Fishman's voice faltered respectfully.

But all of a sudden he saw light.

"And still his father has to support him?" Herr Fishman's face was quite contented, quite sly, as he asked that question. "Does he earn a hundred and fifty-five marks per month?"

"No, he doesn't get as much as that," Herr Wolf admitted reluctantly, and he quickly went back to Yiddish. "But later, when he's a famous attorney, he'll earn as much as he wants."

Problems of Joy

IT took me four long years. I wrote and sent my writings out and got them back and sent them out again to a different magazine. And I got them back again. And so on, for four years.

Huster announced loudly in the dining room that he couldn't get his writings into print because he was not a Jew, and that only Jews managed to get printed in Germany. I was a Jew and I wasn't printed, either. Whom could I hold responsible?

I changed trades many times. In those days it was still easy; there was practically no unemployment. For some time I had a pleasant job as a driver's helper on a delivery truck. We delivered agricultural machines within a radius of a hundred miles of the city. Unfortunately the machine shop went bankrupt. I had to look for another job, and having by chance read an advertisement that Chemical Works, Inc., needed stokers, I applied there.

Never shall I forget the long, drab street leading to the factory, or those mornings when I pushed my old bicycle out of the gate, mounted it, and rode off into the dawn. I was given a leather apron, a leather cap, and an iron rod. I worked at the generators. My job was easy to grasp: all I had to do was to poke my rod around in a blazing fire. This occupation taught me presence of mind—in one week I acquired more presence of mind than in the ten preceding years. Without warning, glowing lumps of coke would fall out over us stokers. But only beginners are burned. After a week you learn to be quicker than the rain of fire. You get used to a heat of a hundred and thirty degrees and more. You get used to everything.

One day I was transferred to a gigantic room and given the job of watching a safety-valve and four pressure-gauges. This represented a promotion. After my work at the generators it was almost a rest. But it was a responsible post. The lives of thou-

sands of people depended on the steady watching of these small, insignificant-looking instruments.

I stood by the instruments eight hours every day. No falling lumps of coke burned holes in my skin, but my eyes burned instead, and my neck felt as though weighed down by an enormous load, from being constantly screwed upward. My world became a very limited world—the board with the pressure-gauges. My thoughts were concentrated on one object—the red danger signal.

Ten of us did this work. Each was responsible for his board with pressure-gauges and safety-valve. Some of us had stared for three and more years at the same indicators. During those years, the faces of some seemed to have taken on the roundness of the gauges themselves. We even breathed in rhythm with the great pistons in the machine shop. All day we heard nothing but the sound of those pistons. Not even our own voices. To tell each other something we had to shout so loud that the veins stood out on our foreheads. Never shall I forget the strange look of the man who stood next to me. His eyes wide open, his pupils seemingly dead, he stared vacantly, lifelessly, at the small round disk with the red danger line. I was afraid to keep a pocket mirror in my overalls lest I be tempted to see what my eyes looked like.

Before me, high in the air between two iron posts, hung a sign as large as a door. It read: DANGER OF DEATH! BEWARE OF YELLOW FUMES! Within reach hung gas masks that looked like skulls. These masks were for us. We could use them in case of need.

Sometimes workmen were overcome by a stream of escaping fumes, and collapsed before they could seize their masks. The ear-splitting shriek of a siren would announce the hasty arrival of the factory ambulance. The doctors jumped from the running boards, holding black cases in their white-gloved hands. They had no faces. They wore gas masks instead. The chauffeur carried an oxygen tank.

But then there came a great day! Marie and Karl Rascher stood

at the factory gate, motioning me to hurry out. It was the day before a holiday. I was so tired. But the news they had for me revived me instantly.

"Good evening, Herr J. Fish-Fishel," said Karl Rascher with a bow.

"What's the matter with you?"

Marie said nothing. She only laughed, holding a magazine under my nose.

I read: "The Pressure-Gauge in Shop 479. A Story by J. Fish-Fishel."

Each took me by an arm.

"You have no right to keep your mouth shut at a moment like this!" Rascher exploded. "Will you please make a speech?"

Marie, in her excitement, kept pinching my arm, but I didn't feel it. I only noticed it later, at home, when I was washing. My arm was covered with black and blue marks.

Frau Moll brought me a letter. Not Fräulein Erna, as usual—no, Frau Moll herself. "I came in person," she said. "Herr Huster does not feel well," she giggled. "He wants his food served in his room."

There was a cheque in the letter. It also contained a request to send in regular contributions! The possibility of a contract was mentioned! It was a big Berlin magazine.

"I had almost given up!" Now I talked and talked and never stopped talking. Now at last I could pour out my doubts and fears. "Four long years!"

Rascher let me rave on. He had brought two bottles of wine. "We must celebrate the event," he said before each new glass.

"No, I couldn't have given up!" I cried, striding up and down my room, with suspenders dangling. "After all, I was quite sure of myself! You'll have to admit, Rascher, that I had confidence in myself!"

Rascher let me talk. He nodded his assent. At least I interpreted everything as assent today. In any case, he said, an event like this has to be celebrated, and he went on drinking.

I never stopped talking.

Whatever the extent of one's later successes, there is nothing to compare with the excitement of getting into print for the first time!

"I wonder how the editor happened to read your manuscript," Rascher joked, uncorking another bottle.

The following Sunday, Professor Urban invited me to tea. He had read my story in the Berlin magazine and corrected it with red ink. "Just one or two friendly strictures," he said, smiling. "After all, you used to be my pupil."

The same evening I went to the grove to meet my father.

"Well? How are things?"

I showed him my story.

But instead of being happy about it, he was frightened.

Yes, he was frightened! Had his name been Schacht and had he been a Gentile, he wouldn't have been frightened. But for a Jewish father in Germany life was complicated. A Jewish father couldn't be happy when his son, after many years of struggle, finally reaped the fruits of his labour. At every step he had to ask himself: What will the "others" say when they see that one more Jew has been successful?

What these "others" would say was known in advance. German anti-Semitism was steadily growing. The Kapp Putsch had long been forgotten by the republicans, but not by the enemies of the Republic. They had reorganized and begun their work of undermining the government, which tolerated their activities with the placidity of a fat, stupid cow. Among these subversive organizations one group was distinguished for its particular violence and arrogance. Its leader was an Austrian, a former compatriot of Yossel Fishman, a stupendous talker, plotter, and demagogue. He knew how to attract malcontents. A few Left papers had discovered the identity of his secret financial backers. These newspapers gave the alarm and warned of the impending danger. They wrote: "Among the enemies of the democratic state can be found

leaders of industry, estate-owners, bankers, high-ranking army officers. Recently they have become interested in an agitator who appears in public in a stained trench coat. They have a patronizing smile when speaking of this 'typical plebeian,' this dispenser of savage anti-Semitism. They make fun of his moustache and often tell one another how much 'Little Moustache' has cost them. But they recognize that his slanderous speeches are more impressive and effective than anything of the sort ever before tried in Germany. Little people particularly are taken in by this demagogue who only recently discovered his hypnotic powers. Who is 'Little Moustache'? He is a shrewd individual, even though he is rather vague about his profession: now he calls himself an architect, now a painter. But this does not worry his backers. What counts with them is the number of people he succeeds in ensnaring for their purposes. Only his enemies care whether he is really an ex-architect or only an ex-paperhanger, or whether he is interested in women or only in men. . . ."

But in vain did a few Left journalists try to call the attention of the republican government to the activities of the dangerous demagogue whose clever speeches combined thundering denunciations of existing abuses with sweet promises for the future. The German Republic had been born blind and deaf. And in democratic Germany a few democratic journalists had far less influence than the adventurer's anti-democratic backers. From time to time the republican government displayed a feeble awareness, but the gentlemen smiled and all suspicion was allayed. Little Moustache's backers admitted that their "*enfant terrible*" sometimes went a little too far, and that not all the Democrats and Socialists were "criminals and bandits." They also admitted that Little Moustache went too far in his Jew-baiting. But after all, they said, politics was not theology, and anyone who had to invent new lies and promises every day inevitably acquired a glib tongue. They smiled meaningfully. "His bark is worse than his bite," they added with a wink. "The end justifies the means," they declared sternly.

Among themselves they said: "It is a great pity that Little Moustache didn't develop a magnetic personality sooner. With him the putsch of 1920 would have been child's play. The ground was fully prepared at that time, with despair, starvation, misery, and discontent on every hand. But our hour will strike again! There will be another depression! We must have our man ready when it comes! Then Loud-Mouth's promises and prophecies will be snapped up like bread and meat cards. And then—farewell German Republic!"

Many Jews thought that by making themselves inconspicuous they would pass unnoticed by the Austrian demagogue, that they would be left in peace. Yossel Fishman, a former compatriot of Little Moustache, was of this opinion, along with the great majority of the German Jews. Many years later, in a far more dangerous time, great European statesmen were to cherish the same naïve ideas as this simple Eastern Jew. . . .

And because I attracted attention by publishing my work in a magazine, Father was frightened.

But he was proud, too. Just as though his name was Herr Schacht.

"Why don't you write under your real name, Jacob Fishman?" he criticized. "Who will know who J. Fish-Fishel is? None of my friends will believe me!"

Foreign Powers and Secret Forces

WHEN Kupke thought of his past, he burned with resentment. What he had gone through in prison he would rather not recall. But later, after his release, after his return home—to the dusty apartment of poor dead Lina. . . . Nobody greeted him. Nobody helped him. A lowdown lot, these tenants of 21 Castle Street. He

spat with contempt when he thought of the days following his return. Herr Stiefel was even ready to kick him out of his apartment! But when Kupke told him: "I've been a quiet fellow up to now, you old rabbit-breeder, but I can break somebody's neck if I feel like it!"—when he told him that and showed his fists, he was allowed to stay. But he found no work anywhere. Everyone asked to see his papers. And all he could show was his prison certificate!

That winter! No job, no money, all alone! At first he could manage with his dole, but after a few weeks the dole was cut, then cut again. The bastards were giving him less and less. Kupke remembered that he had once been a truck driver. "Under Kaiser Wilhelm I was better off!" he grumbled. "Your whole system is rotten! Your whole Republic is nothing but a fraud, if people like me are made to go hungry!" he said sullenly. In his moments of bitterness he thought that things were so bad that they couldn't be worse. But he hadn't yet come to the end of his trials. One day they threw him out of the unemployment office. All he could get now was a few pfennigs from the relief bureau. Then he began to get sore. He had been in jail; all right, that was fair because they had caught him. But now he had to go like a beggar to the city hall for his relief! No, no, no!

"It's all the same to me," he said. "I don't give a good goddamn. The higher-ups are crooks, all of 'em. Some time I'll break their necks, you can bet your pants!"

But nobody listened to him, not even the few unemployed at the relief bureau. Nobody shook hands with him. Nobody would have anything to do with poor Lina's husband.

Kupke railed. "I am Kupke. I'll always be Kupke. And if you don't like it, you know what you can do. . . ."

He no longer went to Müller's saloon; he didn't like the way he was treated there. And yet he had put so much of his money into Müller's pocket in days gone by. But everybody was so ungrateful in this street!

Then came his adventure with Louise. But it didn't take him long to eat up her money. Now she bored him horribly with her daily visits, with her childish giggle, with her thin hair that smelled of the curling iron, with the wrinkles on her face and all over her body, with her whining stammer and her passive gluttony. If only he could find something young!

He was afraid of her. He couldn't bear to stay at home. He was always out, hoping that he might just happen to meet up with someone who could help him.

One day he went into the Brown Bear, a small, cheap bar on the south side of town, where Kupke was unknown. There he became acquainted with a group of habitués, consisting of a few workers, clerks, small businessmen, even a few professionals, schoolteachers and the like. They always sat at the same table, whispering like conspirators. After a few visits, Kupke's despairing look and the ragged condition of his clothes, as he sat alone at his table, attracted their attention. They asked him to listen to a speech. Never before had anybody invited Kupke to listen to a speech. Never before in his life had anybody taken any interest in him! So I must be somebody, Kupke said to himself with amazement; there must be something in me, otherwise they wouldn't be after me with all their might. Flattered, he sat down at their table.

He was a damn fine fellow, the gentleman who spoke that evening about the decay of Germany. Later Kupke learned that this fine gentleman was a former colonel, a certain Doctor Grosse who was now a professor. Kupke was pretty proud of mixing with such refined people. It was true that what they said was nothing new to him. The new part of it was to hear all these things expressed so nicely, when actually they weren't nice at all. Y-yes, Kupke had known all that. That the higher-ups were crooks, all of 'em, and had to be done away with, he himself said every day, though in less refined terms. And as to there being so many wrecks

and failures in Germany these days—who didn't know that? "Very true!" Kupke cried to the speaker. "That's right!" And Kupke didn't believe his eyes when all the people around the table gave him friendly nods!

But then the speaker said something that was really new. He spoke of another man whom he didn't call by name but only by the words "our Führer." Our Führer had said that all our distress was caused by foreign powers and secret forces! Then Kupke really pricked up his ears and opened his mouth! That was interesting! Of course! Why hadn't he guessed it himself! It was only the existence of such foreign powers and secret forces that had prevented him, Kupke, from coming up in the world! And that he, Kupke, was an Aryan, hence a man valuable to human society, and not a vile sub-human Jew, all that suited him perfectly. As the refined man's speech went on, Kupke learned a great many other things which he immediately agreed with because they were so simple. Had he known before how simple everything in the world was, he wouldn't have considered himself so uneducated. N-no, now that he knew all that, he felt quite at the head of the class. He felt as wise as an examining magistrate, smart as a prison warden! Ha-ha, the lecturer was a clever bird! That capitalism, communism, democracy, and Christianity were one and the same thing, and that all together meant no more and no less than Judaism, that was another thing he hadn't known before. But from the Jews you could expect anything! They were so damn rich, all of 'em, they had invented capitalism! No reason why they shouldn't have invented communism, too. It was clear to Kupke that they *had* invented communism! The lecturer didn't spare the clergy, either, and that impressed him too. In prison he had been driven nearly crazy by a parson, who, each Sunday after the service, had insisted upon reminding him of Lina and her stupid death, urging him to reflect and repent. Had he only known at that time what he learned this evening, that Christianity was invented by the Jews only as an instrument for dominating and en-

slaving the German nation, he wouldn't have kept his hands off that parson, the lying Jewish slave!

After Grosse's speech, Kupke was asked whether he wanted to join. "We National Socialists will soon take power. We need people like you, racial comrade. We have a lot of work before us."

"I'm unemployed," Kupke stammered. "I'd be glad to join you. I have a personal account to settle with the Jews!" He thought with hatred of Goldstein, the shoe store owner who had discovered his embezzlements.

"I'll find you a job," Zunk, the chairman, promised him.

"But right now I can't pay any dues," Kupke apologized at once.

"We have plenty of paying members," the chairman boasted. "Money doesn't matter to us."

One of the group asked him: "Were you in it?"

"In what?" Kupke asked cautiously.

"The war!" Kühne, the grocer, replied sternly.

"And how!" Kupke sighed with relief. "I was a corporal!"

"Very glad to hear it, comrade!" and Zunk patted him on the shoulder. "Our Führer was a corporal too!"

Once again Louise said: "He'd like to have a talk with you, Robert."

"Who?"

"Herman."

"Which Herman?"

"Herman Kupke. You know!"

"How could I know? He should come and see me on the beat, not when I'm home. No reason for him to come here!"

"Don't be so heartless, Robert."

"What do you mean? A criminal!"

"He's all alone."

"Does he deserve any better? It was his fault that poor Lina hanged herself!"

"We can't be really sure about that."

"We cops know all about such things! What does he want of me, anyway?"

"He's joined some club and he doesn't know what kind of people they are. I think they have something to do with politics. He's trying hard to be an honest man. And since we live in the same house, and since you're on the police force after all, he asked me in the street whether you knew anything about these people."

"What did you tell him?"

"'Of course my husband knows such things,' I told him."

"We'll see," said Robert, flattered.

A Stain Is Removed

KUPKE, after joining the party, felt very important. Never before in his life had he had the opportunity of mixing on such friendly, such intimate terms, with refined, respectable people. Herr Professor Grosse, a real academician, even shook hands with him when they dropped their arms after the official party salute. Many Nazis, it is true, were poor wretches like himself: unemployed, or clerks working for a hundred marks a month, or young inexperienced boys who had gone through apprenticeship after school but had been unable to find jobs, for now it had become hard to find a job. But Kupke saw nothing wrong in the presence of such poor wretches in the party. That way he didn't have to regard himself as the last in line. Compared with these immature youngsters, he had a certain importance. After all, he'd been in the war, and that was a great asset in the party. And he made these youngsters feel that compared to them he was an old experienced soldier and they had to listen when he spoke. Of

course, they sometimes made fun of him, but he impressed them just the same, he saw that quite clearly.

He, in turn, was greatly impressed by the refined gentlemen. Of course, they had the gift of gab and could talk fluently and easily about anything. There was nothing like a real solid education, Kupke was forced to admit when he heard an educated party comrade speak about the decadent French or the Jewified Americans. "These fellows have learning; our sort can't keep up with them," he admitted. "We can only be soldiers," he said to a young fellow, "and you're not even that. But the ones that do the talking, they know what they're talking about!"

There was Kühne, the grocer, with a tremulous voice, who said in the meetings that the Jews had a monopoly on all business, and that furthermore he had an account to settle with the treasury department of the republican government. The day of revenge for all the taxes he had paid would come! Then no Jew would own a business, and no republican treasury department would make people pay taxes.

And then there was a student, a fat little man, Ottomar Kulish. He was a real brainy fellow! He knew all the figures by heart! Little figures or big figures—he knew them all! "Party comrades," he said, "during the next four years Germany will need less than ten thousand new civil servants, but twenty-five thousand candidates are competing for the positions! Fifteen thousand have studied for years, have polished the school benches in vain! And now? Now they are unemployed!"

One—his name was Hinkel—the party doctor, was a very young fellow. He gave a lecture during which Kupke in his eagerness had almost forgotten to breathe. "Every year," the Herr Doctor said, "the country needs eighteen hundred new physicians at the most, but every year five thousand medical students get out of school. Three thousand two hundred young doctors have crammed and slaved, bought expensive instruments and expensive books,

and passed their examinations—but what for?” What for? Of course Kupke didn’t know—after all the Herr Doctor himself didn’t know and was just asking the audience.

“I know,” said Zunk, the chairman, “I know of other cases that cry out to Heaven!”

“For shame!” Kupke cried with indignation. Zunk had found him a job at the Chemical Works.

“I know a professor,” thundered Zunk, “who gets no advancement in his profession! That could never have happened in the old days—and why? Because in this corrupt Republic there are no opportunities for patriots! There is nothing but nepotism in the Republic! And the government has the nerve to deny him promotion on the ground that he had no advanced training!”

“Scandalous!” Kupke shouted.

“But when a former locksmith is a minister of state, nobody asks about his advanced training! And as to the Secretary of State, he’s nothing but the son of a Red boilermaker, even if he has had academic training. Is that fair? And it’s just the same in the Reich Insurance Office! And when our Hinkel speaks of doctors, I ask you: Who is the chief doctor in the city hospital? A Jew!”

“For shame!”

“Nothing like that could have happened before!” Zunk’s deep agitation was visible; his eyes almost popped out of his head. “And why does this Jew hold the position? They say he was in the war and invented some serum. Well, party comrades, we Germans can take care of that ourselves; we don’t need any Jews! All we want the Jews to do is to get out of here! Down with the whole system!”

The “system” was bitterly attacked. The crimes of the “system” were inconceivable. Kupke had never known how very bad such a system could be, and he was all for an immediate change. Strike hard! No compromise! No wavering! Down with the “system”!

Everybody in the party spoke of the coming Third Reich and

about the German justice that would then be established. "The Reich," exclaimed Herr Huster, "the Führer's Reich will be fronted on five great spiritual values: German blood, German soil, German labour, German honour, and the German Reich!"

Yes, they are five, I counted them, he's right, Kupke nodded with satisfaction. Again and again he was amazed at the idealism that surrounded him. Kupke wouldn't have believed that these clerks, pen-pushers, and even manufacturers had so much idealism in them. Yes, even manufacturers and higher-ups were allegedly members of his party. He could never learn their names, but in every organization there must be secrets; in the army, too, we of the lower ranks were not allowed to know everything. That is as it should be. . . .

He was allowed to sit at their table. Nobody bothered about his past. Only once was he asked to bring his birth certificate and the birth certificates of his dead parents and grandparents, to show whether he was a pure Aryan. At first he had thought that the word "pure" meant free from venereal disease. But he had been cured long ago, during the war. He could prove that. Anyway, they hadn't meant it that way at all. It was a question of blood, they explained. Luckily he was a pure Aryan; his blood and his family tree and everything connected with it was in order. It is easy to imagine Kupke's joy! And now he sat with his party comrades in the Brown Bear, before him a glass of beer and a dish of sausage and potatoes. All he had to do was to help himself. And he did help himself. For him and the other small wage-earners the party treasurer paid the bill. Of course not every time, but still the party was really generous! Not a trace of stinginess! Now Kupke wore high boots, a leather belt and shoulder straps, and, most important, a brown shirt. "Anyone who wants to be one of us," Zunk explained one day as they were setting out for a march, "must wear the brown shirt. The brown shirt is the symbol of the new German spirit!" And all this outfit, including the all-important shirt, was given him free. He could pay when he had

put something aside, they told him. Really, Kupke found nothing to complain of in his party. It was completely different from his previous experiences. He recalled the pettiness of the Spartakists and the Socialists, whom he had joined soon after the war. There the treasurers were always after his money! No, here no one could grumble about the stinginess of the party officials. They always had money, and were always willing to hand it out. Again and again there were free beer parties, and when he was on "duty" they even gave him two marks! And Kupke wasn't the only one who was paid for going on "duty." Recklessly Kupke's storm detachment marched through the streets of the democratic city, brown caps on their heads, leather straps tight under their chins. "Down with democracy!" he cried with the others. He had knocked about for a long time in empty idleness. But now his life had taken on a new meaning, a German meaning. Again he had superiors, equals, inferiors. He had been a corporal, he understood this business, and was glad to be doing it all over again. His heart throbbed with joy as their marching steps resounded in the street. Let the contemptible republican and Red rabble on the sidewalks make fun of them as much as they pleased! Some day they'd have to pay for their jokes!

He experienced his most glorious hours at the field exercises, which were prohibited by the republican government but which took place nevertheless in the woods beyond the town. Here, among the trees, his group practised the tactics of "the seizure of power," "the persecution of Jews and Red rabble," and "street fighting." How he loved his Führer at those moments! He loved Colonel Grosse, Zunk, Herr Huster, Doctor Hinkel, he loved all his big and small Führers, those whom he knew personally, and, above all, the one who directed the whole movement from Munich. At such times he forgot the whole of his wretched life! At last he could forget Lina and everything, everything! He threw himself willingly on the wet fragrant soil of the forest. Ha! Soon the Führer would triumph, he thought fervently. Then there would

be heaps of dough! Everybody would have as much as he wanted! Then poverty would be a thing of the past! And his old war pension would positively be restored to him by the Führer—the rotten “system” had cancelled it, the crooks! Then he wouldn’t have to worry about work, he wouldn’t have to work in the Third Reich! The main thing was for the Führer to take over the government. He’d take everything from the Jews, just as he had promised. And then Kupke would get part of the Jewish capital. Everybody in the party would get some of it!

“I’m sorry for poor Herman,” Robert Liebig said to his wife.

“Which Herman?” Louise inquired feverishly, looking for something in the closet.

“Kupke. He’s all alone. Why don’t you ask him in some time. It’s only right for someone in the house to invite him. He’s been living here so long. Why not be nice to him? After all, he once talked to you in the street and asked you whether he could speak to me. You should have gone to his place to see if he needed something. Have you ever been to his apartment?”

“To his apartment?” Louise was indignant. Good God, and how! “What would I be doing in his apartment?” she protested loudly. “Of course, I’ve never been to his apartment!”

“Is that so? You’ve never been to his apartment?”

“I just told you I haven’t!”

“Neither have I,” Robert said. “He seems a little improved lately. He’s found a good job. He’s night watchman at the Chemical Works, and makes nice money. Ask him in some time.”

“But he was in prison once!” Louise exclaimed, resisting the unexpected suggestion.

“What’s past is past, Louise.”

“Just as you say, Robert.”

All the tenants of the house were amazed! Kupke invited for supper at the Liebigs! This Robert was surely a complete ass!

When Louise left the two men alone for an instant, Robert be-

gan to apologize to his guest, looking at him so strangely that Kupke didn't know what to think. He made up his mind to defend himself if Louise's husband raised a hand against him.

"You must forgive my wife," the policeman whispered. "She's funny with men. It doesn't mean a thing if she doesn't talk to you! Even as a young girl Louise was always cold toward men. That's her nature, you understand?"

Kupke understood perfectly. "Such things do happen," he agreed. But to cover all eventualities, he kept his hands on the table, ready to fight.

The policeman laughed. "Want to play a game of sixty-six?" he asked.

"Sure!"

When Louise came back with a pitcher of beer, the two men were peacefully playing cards.

"Why aren't you nicer to our guest? Don't make such a face," Robert sniggered. "What will he think of you!"

Kupke knew perfectly well what to think of Louise. He wanted to get rid of her, and finally Louise knew it too.

This was her last conversation with Kupke—until 1933, when Louise had reason to be bitterly sorry for everything, everything.

"Why aren't you ever home, Herman? I keep knocking at your door, but there's never any answer."

"No time, Louise."

"You've got another woman, Herman?" She looked at him in anguish.

He looked away from her. He said nothing.

"I knew it," she wailed.

"Go away!" Kupke cried.

"So I'm too old for you now?" she wept, and buried her face in her hands.

"You can't say you're very young," Kupke sneered at her.

"Twenty years ago, when you had all your teeth, you were young maybe."

"You're getting bald, you know, Herman!" she burst out. "As long as I had money in the bank, I was young enough for you. Now that I have nothing, you want to ditch me."

"If you don't shut up quick, I'll tell Robert!"

But she didn't give in without a struggle. She tried tears. She was sure that another woman was in back of it. Another woman! Who was she? She had to know who she was! Jealousy drove her crazy, making her insensitive to anything else. There was no room for other feelings beside it.

"I can't eat a thing since you've been avoiding me," she sighed, looking at him with sad, tender, forlorn eyes.

"I don't like you! Don't keep looking at me like that!" he said. "I never loved you. You get on my nerves. You can die, for all I care!"

"It's not so easy!" she wept.

He put his hands to his ears.

"You'll be sorry," she threatened.

Soon after his break with Louise, Kupke received a request to appear before the party heads.

In the Brown House three men sat at the table. He knew all three of them, and they knew him too, but they acted as though he were a stranger, and not Herman Kupke, the old, faithful party member.

"We will have no criminals among us," Kühne, the grocer, said sternly, and wildly brandished a letter.

"We have been informed that you were in prison," Professor Grosse said coldly.

"There are too many suspicious characters in our ranks already. In the interest of our German movement, we are tolerant, but you were in prison!" Zunk shouted. "What did you do? And I

got you a job! When the management of the Chemical Works finds out . . . !" He was in a sweat.

Kupke was trembling with shame, anger, hate. He hadn't expected this.

The three men looked at him with contempt.

"What have you to say?"

Kupke regained his self-possession. Don't hurry, take it easy! What could happen to him? Nothing could happen. But he'd like to find the pig that had squealed on him.

He slowly drew a light grey booklet out of his pocket. It was his old, well-thumbed military pass.

"I was a corporal! Just like the Führer!" he said defiantly. "I was wounded twice; here are my military papers. I was in the campaign against France. Positional battles for Verdun, engagement at Ornes-Flabas, action in the Argonne Forest, attack against the hill of La Fille Morte. Everything in black and white!"

"All right, all right!" Professor Grosse stopped him with a gesture. "But why were you sent to prison? That's what we want to know!"

Choking with rage, Kupke had to confess the embezzlements committed at the expense of Goldstein's shoe store. He was boiling inwardly as never before.

"The Jew Goldstein? In Wilhelmstrasse?" asked Kühne, the grocer, brightening.

"Yes," said Kupke, crestfallen.

"That makes everything very different!" Professor Grosse exclaimed.

Zunk didn't seem quite sure. "What do you mean?"

Professor Grosse soon dissipated his doubts. He stood up and said solemnly: "The case of *Volksgenosse* Kupke, our party comrade Kupke, comes under paragraph 11 of our rules: Whosoever has been sentenced by a republican court for an action committed by word, writing, or deed against a Jew, may become or remain

a member of the party. Everything that is useful to the German people is right."

"Yes," said Kupke, baffled, and stood at attention.

Kühne, the grocer, was a little slow in grasping things. "Please wait a minute," he begged. "How was that? What did Kupke do? So he acted in writing against . . ."

Zunk had scruples. "Forging official documents! After all . . . !"

"He did injury to a Jew," Professor Grosse explained sharply. And with a side glance at Zunk, who turned red: "Whosoever does not recognize the rules puts himself outside the party!"

Kupke murmured: "Very true!"

He was sent out, and after a few minutes called back again. The proceedings were annulled, he was told. He could stay in the party.

Kupke was so surprised that he didn't reply.

"Have you any idea who the writer of the anonymous letter could be?" Professor Grosse asked him with interest, offering Kupke a cigarette.

When Kupke saw the handwriting he said evasively that it seemed familiar, but that he couldn't tell who the writer was.

But after some urging, he said finally: "It's that lousy Louise!"

"A woman, then! Don't forget you have a record, so better be careful! A few slaps in the face will dispose of the incident. No more!"

Kupke went out, stammering his gratitude. Then, his head high in the air, he went down the stairway of the beautiful new Brown House. Head high, he marched along the streets. From now on he was proud of his past. Everything had changed since he joined the party. He was proud of his party. The party had removed the stain from his past, turned it into a badge of merit. Once again he was an honourable man, a hero in fact. Already he had shown his mettle in the struggle against the depredations of Jewish finance capital. A militant party member who had even

been to prison for his ideas! Yes, that's what he was! A martyr, but a martyr whose good name had just been restored! Down with Jews and down with Jewish shoe stores! Down with Goldstein, the shoe store Jew! Death to Goldstein, the traitor!

And as for that beast, Louise, some day he'd settle with her, he swore. Time will tell. . . .

And so Kupke—he too—found happiness at last.

Book 5

THE END OF HAPPINESS

The Small Shop and the Big Department Store

WHEN prosperity collapsed and everybody in Germany—hence also Yossel Fishman—began to suffer from the economic depression, the comic fairy-tale of Fishman the storekeeper became a rather sad story.

He had had a few years of peace, and now worry and anguish returned to torment him. As though he hadn't suffered enough. As though fate begrudged him even a short respite, a period of convalescence from all the torment of his modest existence. No, he had not suffered enough. No, once again he was to tremble, hope, fear, and pray; once again prayers of entreaty and not prayers of thanksgiving. He was a poor, poor man. He had no property. Several times he had tried to build on this vast earth a small place for himself and his family. What hadn't he tried! And where had he not been! He had lived in different countries, among different peoples. He had tried many languages and all manner of hopes. But once he didn't succeed because he was a Jew. And once he had suffered as all poor men suffer. And once it was the war. And once it was death. Once it was this and once it was that. But now he had really thought that his trials were at an end, and there would be peace! But no, there was still more to come! Again disaster overtook him. He was crushed, slowly crushed by the economic depression. He sank slowly to the ground like a helpless marionette when the strings are being lowered, lowered, lowered. . . .

The depression hit him just as it hit every small man.

But Yossel Fishman was a Jew. For him, special blows were reserved in addition to the others. . . .

The firm of "Y. Fishman, Clothing for the Whole Family" was situated in a side street frequented by many factory workmen and clerks as they hurried home in the evening. In the store's one display window stood a dummy staring stupidly into empty space. It was dressed alternately, in a cheap blouse or a petticoat of silk jersey. The window also contained three pairs of women's heavy underdrawers—one lavender, one salmon, and one sky-blue, all lined with rough wool—a sweater, a few shoes, several pairs of cotton socks, and a faded sign: CLOSED ON SATURDAYS.

The store was what might be expected from the display window: a counter, two wormeaten shelves, and a mirror for the customers. In the rear was a windowless cell, the office, furnished with an old kitchen table, a chair, a small sofa, and a little cabinet of unpainted wood containing twine, sealing wax, and a collection of buttons.

This establishment was Yossel Fishman's happiness, which he thought he had found at last, at an age approaching fifty, the great happiness of the small Jewish immigrant: his own store.

He had no cash box. Receipts went into the giant pocketbook which Fishman had bought during the inflation for the sheaves of paper money and had kept ever since in his trouser pocket.

Yossel Fishman was an unpretentious man. He wouldn't have cared to own a larger store. He had no trace of that driving ambition that gives many a man a hunted look. Even a store with two show windows would have been too much for him. Then he would have needed at least two dummies, and no doubt several dressing rooms, in addition to an extensive stock of merchandise. In such a store he wouldn't have been able to look after everything himself. Too many sizes, too many colours, too many grades would probably have confused him. And perhaps his customers, too, would have been confused and distrustful in a larger store,

in some "Y. Fishman Clothing Company, Inc." They would have been ill at ease in a larger store, and would gradually have stopped coming. These simple people who were Yossel Fishman's customers can be found everywhere in the world, and everywhere these people find small stores like Fishman's. All over the world these people buy only in shops situated in poor little streets, far from the hustle and bustle of busy thoroughfares. They never set foot in a department store because there they never get to see the owner, and consequently don't trust his merchandise. Yossel Fishman's customers came to him because they trusted him, because they knew the "owner" of the merchandise they needed. They asked to see two shirts (Yossel never had more than two of each size in stock), chose one and bought it. A week or a month later they returned and asked to see the ready-made suit in the window. They came with the whole family and bought two pairs of women's underdrawers for Mamma. If the underdrawers were too large, Mamma would alter them herself, she comforted the apologetic Fishman. Another day, they'd buy a pair of cotton socks. And still another day, shoes for the children. And if the shoes were too big, and poor Herr Fishman had no smaller size, they consoled him by saying: "Never mind, Herr Fishman, the children will grow into them."

Again and again the same simple people came to simple Yossel Fishman. They had no very clear idea as to why they bought from him rather than from his competitor, nor did Yossel Fishman know why they should happen to be his customers.

In any case, there was no necromancy about it. And it couldn't be attributed to Yossel Fishman's superior powers of persuasion. How could he, with his faulty German, persuade a *real German*? Usually he spoke very little to his customers; he managed with a few words, always the same words. He would show his merchandise, nod, smile, stroking the exhibited article proudly, almost tenderly.

His customers didn't speak much, either. It was curious how

these people, who everywhere else spoke German like all other Germans, became silent and self-conscious in Fishman's shop, how they grew tongue-tied, how they nodded and smiled, just like the man behind the counter. To these small, sedentary people, a visit to the shop of Fishman the Eastern Jew was almost like a trip abroad—it was like being among foreigners, like breathing the air of another land.

"This coat?" Fishman inquired with a smile.

"Will it fit me?" smiled the customer.

"Why not?" smiled Fishman, unbuttoning the coat and letting the customer slip it on.

"Is it warm?"

"Very warm! Warm as a stove!" Fishman nodded proudly.

"And how much is it?"

Fishman pointed to the label. "For you it'll be two marks less," he smiled.

"Fine," the customer smiled. "Next month my wife will be needing a dress."

"I have pretty dresses!" Fishman pointed to an almost empty cardboard box bearing the inscription: LADIES' GARMENTS. "And how is your family?"

"And your family, Herr Fishman?"

"Thank you very much," Fishman nodded. "So-so."

"Good-bye," the customer smiled.

"Safely home!" Yossel Fishman smiled.

These were the years of prosperity.

But then came the year 1930.

And life became a hazardous toboggan slide.

That's how it is: you delude yourself, you delude others. You are taken in, and others are taken in. Everybody is taken in. Things are going slowly but surely forward and upward. Everything is fine. Everything is wonderful, so wonderful you can't even describe how wonderful it is! A store! And work! And jobs!

And positions for life! Poor mankind, poor ridiculous mankind! For the toboggan slide has no end.

Most of the residents of 21 Castle Street, for instance, were now unemployed. Nearly all of them lived on the dole. Herman Fishman was unemployed.

He had lost his position as head sales clerk—his position for life. Fifty other employees of Max Kahn's department store had been dismissed at the same time as Herman. No, of course he hadn't done anything wrong. His dismissal had been none of his fault. And it hadn't been the department store's fault. The management had no complaints about Herman as a human being, no more than about the fifty others. It was "the times" that lost Herman Fishman his job; don't get the idea it was Herr Kahn, or the personnel manager. It was "the times," pure and simple.

Many now learned for the first time in their lives that they were all employed by "the times." A fine fix to be in! With Herr Kahn, you could talk in a pinch, even with the personnel manager. But how could you talk with "the times"? They dismissed you, and there was no comeback. The times didn't listen to you. The times could crush you; they had fists like a hammer or a battle-ax, but no ears.

Yet it was no surprise to Herman. He had seen it coming. He had seen the times coming. The times can assume all forms, all shapes; they can be death and they can be life. For Herman the times were his stock. Herman's department was a luxury department. Before the depression, his stock had to be renewed every four or five days. Now it lasted a whole month!

It is true that former customers still came to see him, but not to buy. Just to keep up with the styles. Herman did all he could to stimulate their desire to buy. The ladies frankly admitted that they had no lack of desire to buy, but that at the moment they couldn't afford it. The times, the times, they sighed. . . .

Herman himself knew that it couldn't go on like that. A few more weeks like this and he would be called in to see the manager.

In his apprehension he was seized with a veritable selling fever. He talked himself hoarse. The latest fashion, he said, was inspired by the styles of Queen Elizabeth and Mary Stuart's day; this was expressed in the diagonal cut of the sleeves, as well as in the popular Stuart collar. . . . (If my turnover doesn't increase, I'll be fired. My God!)

"Stuart collars? Not bad," his former customers agreed.

"Also the hats with brims coming down in a point in front are inspired by this period," Herman desperately assured them. He could see, in the distance, the personnel manager going around with a large white sheet of paper. Bet he's drawing up a new list of people to be laid off, the bastard! "And this charming set of collar and cuffs," Herman urged gently, "belongs to the same period. There is also a trend," he explained sweetly (the manager was standing right beside him!), "toward wearing the belt a little lower in back than in front, so as to lengthen the back line."

"The real trend today," said a lady, blinking nervously, "is toward wearing dresses bought before the depression."

"For the evening, the cocktail dress is in greater demand than ever before," Herman implored her. "It is usually cut from evening dress goods in the form of a tailored suit, so that when the jacket is removed, it is automatically changed into an evening dress."

But nobody showed any intention of buying an expensive evening dress. And Herman's stock grew dusty, and the pages of his salesbook had thumbed edges. His courage and self-confidence dwindled from day to day. The Fashionable Dress Goods Department was doing no business at all. Herman tried to create the illusion of active business for himself and his superiors by changing the decorations and the manikins every day. He constantly pushed these expensive and beautiful dolls from one place to another, like chess pieces, and changed their dresses. Again and again he arranged the splendid materials in artistic folds, so that he himself was seized by a desire to buy. But he had lost faith in

himself as a sales clerk. An uneasy look came into his eyes whenever he heard steps on the smooth mirror-like floor. And his hands—the carefully manicured hands of a good sales clerk, the hands which had formerly held up and unfolded the costly materials and stroked them with light fingertips—he now kept concealed behind his back, for they were usually trembling.

"I wish you much luck," the manager said regretfully, as he gave him notice. "You know it yourself: it's the times! Should the times change, of course we'll be glad to have you here again. Perhaps you'll be able to find a position in another firm in the meantime."

Of course, Herman made honest efforts to find a position in Leipzig or Berlin or Munich, though he knew in advance that his applications would be rejected. The times were desperate all over Germany. Everywhere people were losing their jobs. Hundreds of thousands. All in all there were several million unemployed in Germany. Herman Fishman was one of these millions.

Good, gay Herman was becoming more and more taciturn. He would leave his home in the morning, and run in despair along Hohenzollernstrasse, Kaiserstrasse, Wilhelmstrasse, all the busy thoroughfares of the town. He dreamed that at home, in the evening, he'd find a letter from Max Kahn's department store asking him back, as section manager, with a fat increase in salary.

But no such letter ever came to Castle Street.

Poor Herman was not yet twenty-two years old at that time.

Even Punch Has a Hard Time

FRANZ Schaller also lost his job. That the depression should hit a sales clerk in times without buyers, that it should hit a young man "without a practical trade"—all right, Yossel Fishman could

understand that. But a carpenter! And a carpenter as good as Schaller! He had seen with his own eyes how good a carpenter Schaller was, for Schaller had made a wonderful shelf for his store. From a couple of plain boards! What skilful hands! The left hand held the nail and the right hand hammered it in. And never missed the nailhead! Never had the hammer slipped! Not a single time! "Mind your fingers!" Yossel Fishman had begged him at each hammer blow, as he admiringly watched the piece of wood turning into a shelf. Franz Schaller had laughed and gone on hammering, and had really never missed a blow! That was the scene that Yossel Fishman remembered now as he thought with helpless anger: He, too? After all, a carpenter, that's a practical trade. . . . But during the depression years practical trades were just as impractical as impractical ones.

Franz Schaller's situation was particularly tragic, for Berta was expecting a child. She had desired that child. For years she had been telling herself that there was no hurry. But now Berta was past thirty; she had said that if she didn't have a child now she'd never have one, and she wanted a child.

Franz had lost his job in the second month of Berta's pregnancy. In the third month it came to Landlord Stiefel's ears that the Schallers were expecting a child. "A disgrace!" Emanuel Stiefel was furious. "Why should a jobless man have a child? And what are they going to pay the rent with? With their dole? Don't make me laugh!" But he didn't laugh at all.

In the meantime Emanuel Stiefel had become a fumbling old man. He still bred rabbits. Moreover, he was now a grandfather, his daughter Elli having remarried and borne two girls.

Elli's first marriage had taken place before the war, a strange marriage—the Stiefels never talked about it. At the time there had been great excitement in Castle Street at the news that Elli had found a sucker. One day an elderly but still quite imposing fellow, with light yellow gloves, had appeared in the street. A huge white pearl glowed mysteriously in his dark necktie and

everybody whispered with envy: "Must be a jeweller, a rich jeweller. They say he's even from Berlin. That Elli has some luck!" The Stiefels were proud and flattered, they smiled and wrapped themselves in uncommunicative silence. The engagement was celebrated with locked doors but open windows, and the wedding followed immediately. Then the couple went for a trip. Elli was as proud as a peacock when a cab drawn by two horses took her to the station. The old Stiefels stood at the gate of their house, waving sadly after Elli and her husband, and sadly sighing: "Good-bye, Elli, good-bye!" The tenants, too, waved and waved from the windows.

A week later Elli was back without her husband. She shut herself up in her parents' apartment, refusing to see anybody. And the old Stiefels wouldn't see anybody, either. "What's wrong? Where's Elli's swell husband?" people whispered with curiosity.

Across the street, near Handtke's bakery, lived Frau Pilz with her daughter Elizabeth, "who could wait, she had plenty of time." This Frau Pilz declared that she knew "all about it." How she had learned "all about it," she refused to reveal; that was her great secret; it was enough that she confided in people, wasn't it? "You see, the whole thing was a fraud!" she whispered. "She's not the first one he fooled! That's his specialty! He ran through her dowry in a week! It serves her right! No reason to get married so young! My Elizabeth can afford to wait!" Elizabeth is still waiting.

And so, many years later, Elli found another man, this time not a "jeweller," but a travelling salesman, dealing in brushes and dust-cloths, a quiet fellow named Emil Korn. He wore a derby hat and would raise it amiably to anyone, to the great amazement of 21 Castle Street. He was so courteous that everybody pitied him for becoming a member of the much-disliked Stiefel family. The wedding had been arranged by Elli's and Emil's mothers, who were old friends. Elli had bashfully agreed and so had quiet Emil, who had no objections. He had also agreed that his wife should go on the wedding trip without him, accompanied only by his and

her mother. He travelled all year round, and had timidly begged to be excused from the week's trip that was to follow his marriage. The women had acceded to his wish. A comical fellow, but he gave his wife children. Two of them.

After her second child Elli became as fat as a sumptuous Wagnerian singer. Her manner of dress served only to accentuate the theatricality of her appearance. She always had double sleeves, and there was always a cape floating from her ample back.

Elli had also become a National Socialist—because the attic was always occupied on Thursdays. Every week she was annoyed by the Fishmans. Of all days, these Jews had to hang up their wash on Thursdays, just the day when she wanted to hang up her own. This dispute between Elli Korn and Frau Fishman had remained unsettled for a long time. Elli almost had a row with her own parents on account of these Jews. But her father stubbornly refused to give notice to his tenant Fishman, for Fishman paid rent, whereas his daughter lived in the house for nothing. "Hang up your wash on Fridays!" he yelled. "Don't you know yet that Jews have no time to do their wash on Fridays, on account of their Sabbath? Thursday has always been reserved for them!" Elli found an ally in Kupke, who explained to her it was all a Jewish trick. A day will come, he prophesied, when the Nazis will liberate the poor German people from this dishonour, too. A day will come, he promised the enthusiastic Elli, a Thursday in the Third Reich, when no Jew will dare to hang up his wash. Join our party!

And so, shortly before Christmas, 1931, Elli became a National Socialist. The same week she discharged her maid to save the expense of a Christmas gift. The elder Stiefels had always let their maids go before Christmas. In January they got a new one. It was cheaper that way, and there were always plenty of servant girls to choose from.

Some time before Christmas, Elli decided to surprise her chil-

dren with a really worthwhile present. She also began practising her piano piece. Twenty years before, she had taken piano lessons for three months, and the piano was still standing in the parlour. Every year, a few weeks before Christmas, she opened the instrument, which was sadly out of tune, and diligently practised "Silent Night, Holy Night," day and night, until the twenty-fourth. With one finger, the coquettish forefinger of her plump right hand, she picked out the tune on the yellow keys. It was the same every year. And in this year of the depression, 1931, just like every other year, she always struck the wrong note at "Holy." Haskel Weiss, who was musical and who, having lived in the house for more than twenty years, knew the Christmas carol by heart and lived in terror of the annual dissonance, used to say in despair: "It would be easier for her to learn to play our Jewish 'Kol Nidre' than to play that note right!" And then, on Christmas Eve, in the presence of her quiet Emil and her deeply moved parents, she gave her children her worthwhile gift: two rag dolls in brown uniforms with red swastika armbands on their sleeves.

Ten years before, I was still a child in Castle Street, and so were my brother Herman and Xaver Wunder and Anna Gaal and many others. We played "War" and later "Revolution." Now, other children played in Emanuel Stiefel's house, and they played other games.

Berta Schaller dreamed of the little being she bore in her womb. When she knew that the children were playing in the attic, where Kupke's wife had hanged herself some time ago, she slipped upstairs and secretly watched their games. The children played with puppets and their game was called "Punch Is Out of Work."

"This is Punch," Berta Schaller heard little Hans Bieber say. "Punch goes to the relief bureau and gets eight marks for relief. And at home his wife is waiting; she is that doll over there. Now she's looking out of the window, 'cause she needs money, 'cause

she wants to buy bread and margarine." Hans Bieber held the doll at the attic-window, from where you could see the whole town.

"But here comes the gas man; he is the Black man," he said in an artificial, deep voice. "He wants money. And here comes the electric man; he is the Black Man too, he wants money too. And here comes somebody that she won't let in. She just closes the door and shouts: Nobody home! But the man gets in anyway, and puts tags on everything and wants to take the furniture; he is the Black Man too. And now all of a sudden Punch comes home from the relief bureau and he gives the Black Man a thrashing and kicks him—bang, bang, bang!—down the stairs." Hans Bieber threw the black puppet on the floor and took the policeman in his hands.

"But here comes Herr Liebig and takes Punch away. Punch is now arrested by the police and can't play for a long time. And his wife sits at home and cries so much she can't do anything. Then she jumps out of the window and breaks her neck!" And Hans threw the doll on the floor.

"Then comes a long black box. They put her in and take her to Handtke's oven. And when Punch gets home, nobody's there. So he goes out and walks down the street and shouts: I'll break everything, I'll smash everything to bits, things must change, I won't stand for it any longer, things must change!"

Then the children marched the two brown Nazi dolls around in a circle—the dolls that Elli had given her daughters for Christmas, three-year-old Margot and five-year-old Sieglinde. And their clear, childish voices sang:

"Let's give the streets to the brown battalions!"

And Hans Bieber made a speech:

"I fought against fourteen years of dishonour!"

When Berta, in tears, told him the story of unemployed Punch, Franz Schaller hardly listened. Ah, Berta never missed a chance

to cry these days. That was her condition. And he? What about his condition? He was a good deal changed by his enforced idleness. Franz, who had always seemed so filled with the joy of life, was now embittered and quarrelsome. He was an outcast, an unemployed carpenter. Formerly he had been a Social-Democrat and now he was a Communist.

He was unemployed, but there was no unemployment in Russia, he heard from the workers' delegates who had been there for a month. They had seen big cities like Moscow and Leningrad, Kharkov, and even Odessa. And immense dams, factory buildings, canals, forests, monuments. They had come back full of enthusiasm. They had been the guests of the Russian government, they had travelled free, they had been entertained in hotels and in restaurants, without cost to themselves. Nowhere had they seen unemployment. In Soviet Russia everybody had a job, they reported tersely. There wasn't any starvation, either, they said. And over there, caviare was not only for the capitalists; every worker could eat caviare! And if Germany were Soviet Germany, there would be no unemployment and no starvation here.

Franz wanted bread and work. He wanted a Soviet Germany. A Soviet Germany . . . with grim earnestness he dedicated his life to that idea.

Berta went to the other extreme. As she didn't have a very high opinion of the workers' delegates to Russia, she didn't think much of Russia, either. She knew every one of the delegates, some of whom had worked in her factory, and none of them spoke Russian. "Suppose a bunch of foreigners who couldn't speak German spent four weeks in German hotels and restaurants and were shown through the Krupp Works, the Munich breweries, the dams on the Saal and the Leuna Works—what would they know about Germany? You can't fool me!"

Every week Berta went to her Social-Democratic meeting and Franz to his Communist meeting. At home, they argued. They held animated discussions about "the happy life of the Soviet

people" which filled Franz with enthusiasm ("That's all nonsense," Berta declared). Their small, poor flat rang with high-sounding phrases about "the value of democracy" ("That's all nonsense," Franz maintained). The only thing they believed in common was that international capital was responsible for the depression, and even that the depression had been artificially created "to bring the workers to their knees." They also agreed that the Nazis were the slaves of German capitalism, and they agreed that things had to change.

But then Berta would say: "With your constant carping, you have undermined the strength of the workers' organizations!"

Franz wouldn't let that pass. "And what did your party do with the power when they had it?"

"They didn't have full control of the government."

"Then they should have taken full control."

"But you were in the party yourself," Berta whined. "You never criticized anything. In our party everybody can say what he pleases. And you know just as well as I do that a lot is being done!"

"Yes, I know!" cried Franz. "You have shop committees, but no work!"

Berta put her hands to her ears. She thrust out her belly. Her whole body stiffened. "Leave me alone!" she wailed.

Franz would begin to lament, to reproach himself for mistreating his pregnant wife. And suddenly he'd notice that the window was wide open and that the whole house had been listening to their argument with great enjoyment.

And down in the yard Kupke stood in his brown uniform, laughing and laughing. . . .

There were always a few women sitting at the windows of Castle Street warming themselves in the sun. But whenever a Jew who lived in the street came by, some of these women would move away from their windows with a contemptuous smile. Yes, many

people in the street now refused to have anything to do with Jews. On every landing there were hostile whispers: "To think that we didn't know that before! That we didn't find it out by ourselves! But of course the Jews are so clever; they hide their crimes so well, somebody has to unmask them! Kupke knows what's what; he was always telling us what the Jews were like! And Elli Korn, too. She's not as dumb as she looks. She talks about it all the time now! And every day it's in the papers! It's hard to believe how easy it is to be taken in by people! Who'd have thought that Fishman was a conspirator against the German nation!"

Yossel Fishman cowered when he saw the chalk-writing on the wall: "The Jew is the Devil's advocate in the human race! Kill him!" He suspected it was Kupke (as a matter of fact, it was not Kupke this time) and he thought of having a frank talk with him. It pained him to have Kupke inciting the tenants against him. He just wanted to ask him a few questions, then Kupke would see for himself how lowdown his behaviour was. How can you say, he was going to ask him, that the Jews are responsible for Germany's misfortune? Was he, Yossel Fishman, responsible? How and why? And who was responsible for Fishman's own misfortunes? Wasn't he having a worse time of it than plenty of workmen? It's terrible times we're going through. You hardly know which is your head and which is your feet, and the small shopkeeper is hit harder than anybody, my dear Herr Kupke! And just such a time you choose to talk nonsense against me in the house! Is it fair? No, it's not fair! How can you say that the Jews are the Weimar Republic, that the Jews are the government! He, Yossel Fishman, really meant to take Kupke, the Nazi, aside and ask him on his honour and conscience: "Now tell me frankly, do you really believe that I am the government? Just tell me as man to man!"

Yossel Fishman did not let on to his wife. Nobody else had to hear that he planned to have a sensible talk with Kupke. Why

shouldn't Kupke understand that his accusations were unfair? Life was becoming unbearable in Castle Street, with Kupke throwing his anti-Semitic pamphlets and newspapers into the mail boxes. Everywhere you could read in big letters: "It's THE JEWS' FAULT!"

It is true that not everybody in the house believed Kupke and his pamphlets. The Schallers in the rear apartment, and the chimneysweep Hummel, had heated arguments with Kupke. They defended the Jews, saying that the Jews were perfectly decent people and harmed no one. Why not leave them alone? "Oh," Kupke would exclaim, "all that's just a mask! The Jews want to destroy Germany and have a Jewish Reich of their own. They have even mobilized secret forces and foreign powers! And every German will learn some day," he shouted from his window, "that every Jew is a born crook!"

Of course Berta replied that she hadn't known the forger Kupke was a Jew. But there she was wrong! exulted Kupke. His act had been a patriotic act, he had been a martyr, a victim of international Jewry, he really was a national hero! After all, he had only recovered from a Jew what this Jew had stolen from the German nation. And he wasn't done yet! Some day he'd get back everything. The whole party was behind him! This Jew Goldstein, this Jewish shoe thief, he'd see something! Just wait till the Third Reich comes. . . .

The Schallers and Hummel finally gave up arguing with Kupke, it was hopeless. Who could argue with a bum like that! To Herr Fishman, Schaller and Hummel said that he shouldn't take Kupke's raving so seriously. After all, there were still some decent people in the house. Besides, they said, the Nazis would never get to power. The Republic knew how to fight them, and the Left parties and the working-class organizations with their millions of members, they had a word to say, too!

Herr Fishman was deeply moved, and felt protected.

Arthur Schubert still lived in the house. He, too, declared in his false treble: "Yes, it's the Jews' fault that I'm unemployed. Kupke is right. Things have got to be changed!"

And he bought a swastika, fastened it to his lapel, and went, arm in arm with his intimidated little wife, to Nazi meetings, where the air was not polluted by the presence of Jews, there was no Itzig with his hooked nose, there was no Judas to tell lies to the German people—there were only Germans.

Schubert lived on the small sums given him by the relief bureau, but the Nazis promised that his situation would soon improve. First he must help break the yoke of Judas. It was Schubert who had chalked the inscription on the wall. He had written it in big letters: "The Jew is the Devil's advocate in the human race! Kill him!" He had formerly kept stock in a pig-iron establishment, and was accustomed to measuring things in yards. "*Juda verreckel!*"—"Death to the Jew!"—the usual inscription written on walls, seemed to him too short to attract attention.

Xaver Wunder also wore the swastika. He was a husky fellow now. Whenever he met a Jew his eyes grew hard, dark. He was an athlete. Yossel Fishman, meeting Wunder on the stairs, would hug the wall and try to make himself as small as possible.

Xaver was not jobless, for his profession had not been affected by the slump. He was a butcher in the slaughter-house, where he specialized in the slaughtering of calves. He tied the hind legs of the calf, lifted the stupidly staring animal in his giant arms, hung its tied legs on a hook as one hangs up a coat, letting the free legs and head hang down. The calf's thrashing legs sought a support, and its foaming mouth touched the sticky blood of another calf slaughtered before it. Then Xaver seized a hammer and a long spike, and drove the spike into the animal's head, between the eyes that rolled, bulged, almost popped out of their sockets. The little calf twitched once more, but it was already dead, and immediately it was skinned, dressed, quartered, the still-warm

pieces of flesh thrown on one truck, the bloody skin on another truck. The head was first scalded; then an attendant held it by the slippery tongue and scraped it clean with a knife. Blood flowed all around Xaver; a boy emptied pails of water over the stone floor and swept the still-steaming red bowels into a pile. Then it was the turn of the next calf to be strung up by its hind legs. And again Xaver drove in his spike. All day long he drove his spike. That was his trade.

In another corner of the large yard, Herr S. Klein, of 33 Castle Street, slaughtered an ox each week for the pious Jews of the town. According to the ritual, the animal's fore and hind legs were tied, and it was thrown down on its side, and Herr Klein, from behind, cut its throat with one deft stroke of his knife. On the day when the local Nazi paper wrote with indignation that ritual slaughters should be prohibited because the Jews tortured not only the German people but German cattle as well, on that day twenty young butchers, among them Xaver Wunder, gathered in the slaughter-yard. They crept up from behind, and pulled a bag over the *shochet's* beautiful, bearded face, beat him with clubs and leather straps, untied the poor German ox, and, shouting and whistling, drove it across the immense yard.

Three old butchers, taking pity on their Jewish colleague, released him from his bag and set him back on his feet. They caught the ox for him and for a second time it was tied and thrown on its side, and the groaning *shochet* killed it in the exact manner prescribed in the ritual, trying hard, meanwhile, to give the impression that he had already forgotten his thrashing. Many years before, he had come to Germany from Warsaw, where he had seen Jews beaten by the Russians. He vividly remembered his childhood, and now he smiled bitterly. The young people in the slaughter-house of this small town in Central Germany were annoyed by this Jewish smile. They didn't know what this S. Klein was thinking about. He smiled because he was thinking of his childhood. At that time he had fled from the beatings, but

here in Germany they had caught up with him again. And that was the reason, that was the reason for the Jew's smile!

He didn't know who had attacked him, who had beaten him. But he knew that of the many butchers who worked there only three had had the courage to set him back on his feet. Now he limped from yard to yard, staring inquiringly at all the butchers, who grinned back at him in embarrassment. They were all as bloody as he was, and armed as he was with a bloody knife. Only one difference was visible: he alone among them wore a beautiful black beard and a black skull-cap. Xaver Wunder had just finished his tenth calf when he saw the solitary Jewish butcher approaching him. Maliciously he muttered a question at the *shochet*: Was he by chance looking for the way to Palestine? Just wait, it wouldn't be long before Xaver would be roaring instead of muttering.

Xaver's mother and Heider, the railroad worker, now retired, also became members of the Nazi party. The two Wunders and old Heider had never been so happy before. Life, the world, happiness and unhappiness—all that had seemed to them inexplicable, for a long time all that had been a sealed book to them. But from the time that Kupke had first brought them newspapers and taken them to the meetings where again and again they were given explanations—always the same explanation of everything—a light had dawned upon them, and at last and once and for all they had understood all about life and everything else! Really they might have discovered it for themselves long ago! Of course the Jew was responsible for the five or six million unemployed, for the starvation and misery in Germany! The newspapers made it perfectly clear what sub-human creatures the Jews were. Would they be allowed to write it if it weren't true, huh? Kupke himself asked that question, and the answer was so simple, wasn't it? And as the Fishmans were Jews, they were criminals and sub-humans and even worse!

Even the plump midwife, Frau Schade, had become a Nazi! During the war we had gone foraging together, the midwife and I the little Jewish boy—and now she was a Nazi. She had turned Nazi when, during the depression, the birth-rate had fallen, and her earnings with it. And one day she found herself in a Nazi training centre, in the neighbouring town of Z——. Doctor Hinkel, whom she had met by chance at a difficult delivery, had invited her to attend a free two-week “party course for midwives.” The anti-democratic Nazi party gave such courses everywhere in the democratic Reich, for all professions, and quite openly—the Democrats were as acquiescent as Xaver’s calves and S. Klein’s oxen.

Frau Schade’s course was designed to turn every German midwife into an ardent fighter for the coming Third Reich.

“No woman’s profession affords so many opportunities for political action as that of the midwife,” a midwife from Berlin announced to the students. “In close contact with the women of all classes of the German nation, even the poorest, who neither read nor listen to the radio, at a time when women are particularly accessible and impressionable, the midwives, trained in all important problems, are able to exert a tremendous political influence on the population.” For the collapse of the profession of midwifery, and the catastrophically falling birth-rate, the responsibility fell chiefly on the Jewish midwives.

Frau Schade timidly asked leave to speak, and raised the objection that in her town there was no Jewish midwife, not a single one. But the midwife from Berlin comforted her with the assurance that in Berlin there actually were Jewish midwives, all of them named Frau Kohn.

After Frau Schade had heard every day for two weeks that the Jews had organized a conspiracy to reduce the German birth-rate by means of abortions and the sale of rubber articles, and thus put an end to the German nation, which fact could be clearly deduced from well-known Hebrew books written three thousand years ago—see the special issue of the *Stürmer*—after this “gigantic Jew-

ish conspiracy against Germany and the German midwives" had been rammed down her throat again and again, she began to believe it.

It was she who shortly after her return had organized the "dust war" against the Jews. As soon as bedding was put out to be aired in a "Jewish window," nearly all the other residents of 21 Castle Street shook their brooms and doormats from their windows.

Anna Gaal was another who now never greeted Jews. She had become Kupke's mistress! There was twenty years' difference between her and Kupke, but Anna really couldn't have found anything better. Kupke earned good money—indeed, he was one of the few residents of Castle Street who was still fully employed. Poor Lina, the prison, all that was forgotten. Ida Gaal was proud of her clever daughter Anna and her uniformed son-in-law who was "in the flower of his manhood." She somewhat envied Anna her sweetheart. After all, she wasn't so old herself, and would gladly have taken a man, but nobody responded to her charms. But Anna had luck with men. She had had an affair with a soccer player at a time when she was interested in sports. Later she had gone with a pianist, and for some months had hummed the latest hits from morning till night. Later she took a Communist boy friend, and paraded every Sunday with the Communist women's organizations. The boy had presented her with a brand-new red kerchief the very first day of their friendship. And now she slept with Kupke, and quite naturally hated the Jews, the Reds, and the Republic. Kupke had promised to marry her, perhaps in the Third Reich. At any rate he'd think about it. And one night when they went from their bedroom to the same kitchen where Lina had once kept house—in a moment of weakness, while they were making sandwiches to restore themselves—Kupke revealed to the passionate Anna that he had serious hopes of getting a big job with the police of the Third Reich. "You don't say so!" said Anna, dumbfounded, and suddenly she was all desire once more. But

Kupke said he had better get some sleep. The next day, he said, he was to be on duty, there was some Leftist meeting to be broken up, and he needed all his strength. Anna virtuously understood.

"Heil 'itla!" she said obediently, and fell asleep.

Kupke Is Attacked

YOSSEL FISHMAN waited a long while for an opportunity to carry out his plan. Not that there was any real plan in his mind, for Yossel Fishman was not a very imaginative man. He had not prepared any special strategy for dealing with Kupke, and when the opportunity finally came, Fishman had to improvise. His was not what you would call a far-seeing, calculating mind. His "plan" was of the utmost simplicity: he would talk to the Nazi "as man to man." And now, when he suddenly saw him passing his store, arm in arm with Anna Gaal, he accosted him bravely, though with pounding heart, and said in a deeply afflicted voice:

"Good morning. Have no fear, don't be afraid of me. Am I so terrifying, and did I ever do you any harm?"

The situation was dramatic, there is no doubt about it, and Yossel Fishman's voice did not sound self-confident in the least. But Kupke, too, was thrown off balance. He could think of no reply but a contemptuous sneer: "You—harm me? Bah! I wouldn't advise you to try it!"

"Maybe you don't know me any more. Maybe you've forgotten who I am," Yossel Fishman said cautiously. "You used to know me very well. That was when things were going badly for you, much worse than today. Today, thank God, you are doing well. I used to be sorry for you, but today you can be sorry for me, if you want to—of course only if you want to. Yes, yes, now you're

doing well, I see it and hear about it. You've grown younger, not like me. You're engaged again. You have a nice young fiancée. My compliments. Well, well, you mustn't blush, Fräulein Gaal; after all, it's all right for me to compliment you. I'm a married man." Here he stopped and timidly cleared his throat before going on. "Would you accept a little present from me to celebrate your engagement? I'll find something for you in my store. Maybe you'd like to come in. I'll be greatly honoured."

Yossel Fishman was himself surprised how easily he found words today, how smoothly he could express himself. But it would have been little help to him if Kupke had been alone. It was Anna who eagerly accepted his invitation.

"Don't be silly," she whispered softly to the reluctant Kupke. "There's nobody to see us!"

It was true—there was nobody around as far as they could see. With an embarrassed giggle, Anna stepped into the store of "Y. Fishman, Clothing for the Whole Family," resolutely dragging after her a bewildered Kupke.

Once in the store, however, with the door closed after him, he quickly regained his self-possession. His head high in the air, he installed himself on the counter, laughing loudly for no apparent reason and swinging his legs, which were encased in high brown riding boots. Complacently he winked at his eager fiancée, made signs to her. He'd see to it that they got some fun out of this, he indicated.

Yossel Fishman took some towels from a cardboard box. Anna knew what was proper, and she smiled gratefully and indulgently at the same time. Kupke protested noisily that he wouldn't accept any gifts, that he'd take the towels only if he were permitted to pay for them.

Yossel Fishman looked at him askance. "When I offer a gift to your fiancée, whom I knew as a child, it's my own business."

Anna's political obligations toward Kupke vanished completely

from her mind. "Do you remember how I came every Friday evening to turn off the gas? And every Saturday to light the oven?" she said gaily. "Imagine"—she turned to her fiancé, who was listening in anger—"they're not even allowed to touch the candlesticks. Is that still so, Herr Fishman?"

"Of course, Fräulein Gaal. It has been so for a thousand years and more, and will always be so."

After Yossel Fishman had wrapped up six towels, he invited the couple to have a look at his office. No street noises penetrated into the windowless cell. A single fly had strayed into the flypaper and stuck there buzzing and struggling. The round globe of the lampshade cast a dim light. Reluctantly Kupke let Anna push him down on the little sofa. He stared at the fly. Anna's eyes, too, kept coming back to the buzzing black spot. Neither of them remembered how they came to be here in Fishman's store. Only now did they realize in whose office they were sitting!

"Are you sure we're not disturbing you?" Anna chirped. Again and again her gaze returned to the poor fly, and she would have liked to tear herself away.

Yossel Fishman calmed her: there were no customers, all business was at a standstill, anyway. . . . He blinked and sat down at the kitchen table that served as his desk. Behind his sparse beard the couple could see his thin, pulsing neck. Fishman was a mere wisp of a man, a dwarf beside Kupke.

He pointed to a pile of letters. "Do you know what these papers are? Nothing but bills, summonses, tax-collectors' notices, judgments, yes, judgments. Why should I hide it from you? It's going to pieces, my business! Maybe you think I am complaining just because everybody is complaining nowadays. But I'm telling you the truth. My creditors want money, but where can I find it? My customers have no money, so I have no money, either. What's that newspaper you're holding in your hand, Herr Kupke? May I have a look at it?"

Kupke couldn't prevent Fishman from taking a look at his

paper. "That's what I thought," said Yossel Fishman, shaking his head sadly. "The Jews, always the Jews! Here!" He returned the newspaper to Kupke.

"We really must be going," Anna said in embarrassment.

"Just a minute," Yossel begged hoarsely. "You see what I've come to. Just listen to me quietly for a minute and you'll learn how things have turned out for a man who has done everything he could to make an honest living. But now I'll soon be done for. I'll soon be ruined. The news doesn't displease you, I know. You'll be glad, Herr Kupke. Don't shake your head, dear Fräulein. I'll bet anything that your fiancé will laugh with joy when I'm done for."

Ann was sweating with embarrassment. Kupke objected weakly: "How can you think that of me?"

"I know, I know. You wish me everything that's good," Fishman said plaintively, his mouth trembling. "But am I not a thief and a criminal and Heaven knows what else? Look at me carefully, please. Am I not a bandit, according to you Nazis? Jews like me are responsible for everything. May God forgive you."

Kupke cast a despairing glance at the flypaper. His hands were wet. "But all that doesn't apply to you," he protested.

Anna held tight to her package. "Of course it doesn't," she said, and her voice was so unnaturally shrill that it frightened her.

"Oh? It doesn't apply to me? You have nothing against me?" Yossel Fishman said. "Maybe you mean poor Haskel Weiss and his wife Dvora?"

"We don't mean them, either," Kupke shook his head. "No-o." He nodded generously. Then, grinning shrewdly, he inquired: "But after all there are secret forces and foreign powers among you Jews, aren't there?" and in a whisper, he added: "You can't deny that."

The fly suddenly ceased buzzing. Its wings now stuck fast to the glue. Its body no longer quivered. The long yellow ribbon of paper swung gently to and fro.

"Who tells you these fairy-tales?" Yossel Fishman asked savagely. "Who tells you such nonsense?"

"The Führer said so," Kupke protested candidly. "And whatever the Führer says is true."

"My fiancé has nothing against you," Anna again intervened. "But it's true about the Jewish criminals. After all, there are such people!"

Kupke nodded in agreement. "We don't mean the poor Jews like you," he said generously. "We've nothing against them. But Kahn's department store will see a thing or two when we take power."

"And what harm has Herr Kahn ever done you, Herr Kupke?"

"He ruins German economic life!" Kupke lashed out. "He throws his employees out in the street! He is responsible for our unemployment!"

"He dismissed my son too," Fishman said desperately. "But did he do it just because he wanted to? Because it gave him pleasure to make a young Jew like Herman unhappy? Wouldn't Herr Kahn rather see his department store doing a good business, selling a lot and earning a lot and giving work to all his employees? You don't understand what business is, Herr Kupke, I really don't think you do."

"And you don't see through Jewish fraud!" Kupke cried in a fury. "Everything's so simple, Fishman! Your racial comrades, the rich Jews, have organized a conspiracy against Germany. They unleashed the war in 1914 and lost it in 1918! And the revolution and the inflation, they made them, too, hand in hand with the Bolsheviks. Behind everything, my dear Herr Fishman, you can feel the vengeful hand of the secret bloody Jewish world government! Can't you see that? Why don't you understand it? Why don't you admit it?"

"It's true," Anna urged Fishman, whose face had turned white. "It's all so simple," she insisted.

"It really couldn't be simpler," Yossel Fishman said with resig-

nation. He stood up. "Now I see everything. Once I thought I could find peace in Germany. And now I see it all. In the country where I was born, where I came into this beautiful world, I saw it too. There's no end to seeing things. A Jew has to see things over and over again. There, everything was the Jew's fault too: hail and fire and water and drought. Whenever we were particularly miserable over there, my poor mother always said that in Germany people were more intelligent than in Galicia. She read, day and night, German books by Herr von Schiller and by Herr von Lessing, so she thought she knew Germany." The couple had risen from the sofa and were staring at him with blinking eyes and open mouths. Yossel Fishman came up close to them, and they moved backward out through the door of the office, into the shop. He followed them, and opened the door to the street, but he didn't let them go quite yet. "My mother died in this beautiful faith, and maybe the Almighty in Heaven will tell her now that educated German writers are *one* thing and that Germany is *another*. Maybe the Almighty will tell her that Herr von Schiller and Herr von Lessing don't live here in Castle Street, or anywhere else in Germany, because the two gentlemen were buried long ago. And maybe at this very minute He is showing her Herr Kupke in her son's store. And maybe He'll reveal to her that, though Herr Kupke has never heard of *Nathan the Wise*, by Lessing, he wants to exterminate all the Jews including Nathan, just as his Führer ordered him to. And the Almighty will reveal to my mother that Herr Kupke regards his Führer as an honourable man and that the Führer regards his Kupke as an honourable man, but He will tell my mother that both of them are very fine, honourable men indeed, and that one is as good as the other." Yossel's voice broke. It hurt him to speak. Now the way was clear. "Go, go, be a fine, honourable man, so that later you may be able to appear before God in the next world. God does not forget anything. He won't forget you or your deeds!"

Kupke retreated. Anna was in tears. He pulled her out into the

empty street. God! He had never thought of God in all that business! In recent years he had never thought of God at all! Down in his real self he was a naïve coward who felt strong only when he was dealing with the weak. But God, whispered an obscure memory from his remote childhood, God was strong! And the God of these terrible, almighty Jews might be a terrible enemy. . . .

"Do me the favour of getting out of my sight!" Yossel Fishman cried, slamming the door.

Stunned, Kupke turned around. "Wait here," he whispered to Anna. He tore open Fishman's door and cried: "Take it easy! Take it easy, will you? Who's done anything to you? What do you want? Who wants anything from you? Take it easy! Why should you talk that way to me? That's taking advantage of a man!"

Then, cursing and laughing nervously, he went away with his Anna.

But some memory of this day remained in him, and we shall see what consequences this had for the Fishmans.

The Living Corpse and His Crown Prince

IN Berlin there was once a café frequented by eccentrics, geniuses, madmen, and people who were all these things at once. The name of this café was Megalomania.

There was a café called Megalomania in our little town, too. In 1933 this name had to be changed to Café Deutschland although its proprietor, in a long memorandum submitted to the police, did his best to prove that the name Megalomania had no political implications, that it was merely named after the famous café in Berlin which had been closed a long time before.

But now, in the autumn of 1932, the place still went by its old name, and thanks to its free stock of newspapers and periodicals, its habitués remained faithful to it, despite the depression. Among these habitués there were some local characters who came every evening and gave the place its particular tone.

There was the architect who had a theory that the houses of today were not houses, the colours not colours, the walls not walls, and that modern architecture was nothing more nor less than a criminal plot against poor mankind.

"Equal rights for all colours!" he proclaimed fanatically, spilling his coffee. "You'll see that in a hundred years we'll have apartments with green ceilings, red doors, black floors, and yellow furniture. The problem of walls will be solved some day, too!"

"Interesting," said Prolet, bored.

Prolet was no proletarian—he was the son of a big textile manufacturer who provided him with ample means of support. He was one of the prominent habitués. His hair grew down over his neck, his fingernails were disgustingly black, he wore a filthy coat and under it an old sweater. Those who didn't know him might have taken him for a beggar. He would not have refused their offerings, even though he lived in a private villa and had a valet and cook. This villa had been furnished for him by his sorely tried family, who couldn't bear the sight of him, because, for "socio-political" reasons, he always rigged himself out like the earth's "disinherited."

He planned to found a party of the unemployed. According to his views, only the six million unemployed could bring about "a radical-conservative upheaval of existing conditions." Among the unemployed whom he approached again and again without success, opinion concerning him was divided. Some thought simply that he was a little cracked. Others inveighed against the "hypocrite" who, by his artful poses, amused himself at the expense of the "exploited class." A few shrewd fellows explained that his purpose was only "to throw dust in the workers' eyes" so that they

wouldn't notice the shady business he was carrying on "at the behest of the upper bourgeoisie." In brief, his proletarian manners, his affectation of vulgar speech and filthy clothes, did not achieve the desired results. Nobody was taken in by his conspicuous vulgarity. And he never succeeded in founding his "ultra-radical-conservative party of the unemployed."

However, he paid the cheques of many unemployed habitués.

The thin vegetarian hated him passionately. Every evening he harassed him with malicious questions.

"I see that you haven't reformed your ways of living."

"What do you mean?"

"You still don't eat scientifically."

"Oh, kiss my ass!"

"And how are your chewing instruments working?" The vegetarian was quite serious about it!

"What?" Prolet inquired suspiciously. "What are chewing instruments?"

Rascher translated these imposing words. "The teeth," he said, smiling. That smile was a mistake.

"You're a cynic, Rascher!" The vegetarian was furious. The redhaired waitress came to the table, asking: "Who called me?"

"I did," the painter declared, patting her behind.

"Stop that!" the vegetarian cried in his agitation. "At any rate I maintain that in a hundred years no living man will eat meat or eggs . . ."

"Rubbish," said the Crown Prince. "I am the editor of a Socialist newspaper. What do you know about the future state?"

". . . or dairy products, and as a result arteriosclerosis will disappear from the face of the earth!" The vegetarian never allowed anyone to divert him from his favourite subject.

"Interesting," said the architect, with boredom.

"My dear Crown Prince," said the vegetarian, turning to the editor, "in the future state the science of vitamins will be put on an equal footing with Marxism. We shall achieve happiness only

when the human race pays more attention to the inner relations between the chemical constitution and the physiological functions."

"All right," said the painter sympathetically. "The waitress has a beautiful behind!"

"Every time we discuss serious problems," the vegetarian reproached him angrily, "you have to talk about women!"

"Is the Living Corpse still alive?" Rascher asked the Crown Prince amiably.

The Crown Prince was, of course, no crown prince—he was given that nickname because he was the most likely successor to the present managing editor of the *People's Voice*. That, at least, was what he and others thought as late as 1932. For the moment, the position was still occupied by white-haired Albert Koch, whom everyone called "the Living Corpse." Nobody knew who had given him this nickname, but everybody knew why. There had been a time when Albert Koch thought neither of himself nor of his death. Before the war, he had been sentenced to serve a term in a prison fortress for lèse-majesté; during the war he had organized a strike in a munitions plant, and he was saved from jail, and worse, only by the collapse of the monarchy and the end of the war. He had courageously defied all dangers. He and others liked to recall one March day in 1920 when, alone and unarmed, he approached heavily armed rebels and cried: "I laugh at death!" That had been long, long ago. Now his attitude toward death had undergone a fundamental change. It went so far that he, who had previously made the most stirring speeches at the graves of deceased party members, now found a pretext at each funeral to stay away from the cemetery. Death, he explained publicly, didn't scare him. Quite on the contrary, the idea of the cessation of life had a calming effect on him—but he couldn't go to the graveyard because he had to be careful of draughts. He felt "deathly sick, anyway." It was tragic: at a time when the fate of the whole country was at stake, the chief preoccupations of this political editor were

sickness and death. He had become an old man. One day he declared that he felt a malignant stomach ulcer. Another day he thought he had cancer. Then again he hesitated between pericarditis and duodenitis. With the same passion which in his youth had kept him absorbed in the works of Karl Marx, Malthus, and Ricardo, he now devoured innumerable books on medicine. Just as he had previously studied the laws of social life, he now studied the morbid symptoms of the human body—with the unfortunate result that he really fancied himself sick and was never clear about the nature of his disease. He discovered in himself almost all the symptoms he found in his medical books. Once he even thought he had measles, in his old age! But the doctor declared laughingly that it was only a harmless nettle-rash. Deeply offended, he changed his doctor at once. He was always disloyal to his doctors for the simple reason that most of the time they prescribed a harmless laxative instead of taking his diseases seriously. Only the “natural remedy” quacks seemed to understand him. He stood staunchly by natural remedies, and swallowed innumerable garlic pills and sipped bad-smelling infusions. He wore mittens even in summer. He shivered with cold as he sat in his editorial office, coughing, spitting, and complaining: “What can it be now? I am in a state of utter collapse. I feel like a pile of ashes!”

The Crown Prince had to bide his time, but he held on tenaciously, deeply resenting the fact that an old man was blocking his career. It is true that the articles written by the Living Corpse had long since become unreadable, and his conversation, in which he constantly repeated himself, afforded his listeners no enjoyment whatever. The Crown Prince, who was his closest collaborator, no longer even tried to repress his yawns. He was young and he couldn't understand why the Corpse should be so unwilling to die. He suffered from the usual disease which strikes the assistant manager of any ordinary enterprise—and a political editorial office torn by petty jealousies is no better than any commercial firm.

The Crown Prince was fed up with this endless waiting. He

was impatient to reach his goal, and he began to intrigue. In his relations with everybody except the Corpse, he assumed the role of the candid, plain-spoken young man. With the Corpse he continued yawning, and he maintained a malicious silence while his superior talked himself hoarse. But toward all other persons his attitude was one of utter frankness, and he laughed boisterously and entertained everyone with confidential inside gossip about the office.

Above all, he tried to keep on good terms with the business administration. This newspaper organ of the largest Leftist party in town was administered by a committee consisting of a few workmen, a few clerks from the social security office and the co-operative, and a few trade union secretaries, all of them fine fellows who, you couldn't deny, had a certain amount of shrewdness. Above all, each of them was eager to keep to the established routine and let things drift at an unchanging leisurely pace. The Crown Prince had a hard time trying to rouse these bureaucrats from their torpor. They told him quite frankly to leave them alone. The chairman of the committee, Alfred Richter, declared that the differences of opinion among the political editors who wrote about national problems interested him far less than the local section, where one tactless article on municipal problems could easily lead to a loss of advertising and subscribers! What on earth did the Crown Prince want? He, Richter, was aware of the Living Corpse's increasing senility. But what difference could the treatment of general political problems make to the business management of the paper? What interested the committee was that the ledgers should show a favourable balance at the end of 1932. . . . Of course the Crown Prince didn't need any help in the ridiculous job of adapting for local use the press releases that came every day from Berlin by mail. But for the present, to dismiss the Living Corpse was out of the question.

The Crown Prince's attempts to cause the old man's downfall by flattery, studied silence, and insidious hints met with no suc-

cess. The committee members were decent people, old party hacks all of them, and none of them was under fifty. They often talked about the importance of gratitude in politics—their favourite subject. Poor old Koch! Wasn't it sad to see the feeble applause that greeted him at meetings now that he was old and stale! How different his political life had once been! In former days the very appearance of Albert Koch had caused stormy bursts of enthusiasm! But now when he took the floor, pale and weary, only pity could be read in the attitude of the audience. No, not only pity. Also impatience, also scoffing and derision and forgetfulness. But they, his old comrades, his companions-in-arms before and after the war, they had forgotten nothing. After all, the Living Corpse's merits were indisputable. And in his latest articles, advising his readers to keep cool and see things as they were, and avoid provocation by the reactionaries, he continued to demonstrate his sense of responsibility. In the face of these achievements, the Crown Prince's constant insistence that the Living Corpse's political opinions only expressed his sclerosis mattered little. Perhaps he really did suffer from arteriosclerosis. Who could be sure? No member of the committee was a physician. . . .

This explains Rascher's inquiry: "Is the Living Corpse still alive?"

One a.m. was the closing hour for licensed cafés. We had to leave. But nobody thought of going home. We walked instead, down one street after another. The chimes rang every quarter-hour. The dark streets were empty. In front of us the Crown Prince walked with a pile of newspapers under his arm. At his side the vegetarian continued his passionate orations, defending a synthesis of raw food, gymnastics, free love, and socialism. Now and then the two would halt, and we heard their resounding voices.

"I say 'Yes!' "

"So you say 'Yes'?"

"Yes! I say 'Yes!'"

"Incredible! And do you know what I say?"

"No idea," the vegetarian grumbled uneasily.

"I say 'No!'" the Crown Prince declared peremptorily.

A policeman suddenly appeared and requested them not to talk so loud at this late hour. Then, with a salute, he vanished.

"And I say 'Yes' in spite of you!" The vegetarian wouldn't give in.

"Listen!" the painter cried enthusiastically. "I am painting a picture of a woman! A stupendous creature!"

"Women again?" the vegetarian sighed.

At three a.m. the painter dragged us to his studio to show us his latest canvases. He was very proud of his "Portrait of My Parents," which was to be finished by December. Two little old people sat on something that vaguely resembled a sofa. The father had a green face. Beside him sat the mother, her jaw heavy and bestial. Behind the father a luminous red bird. Behind the mother a blue cat. Between them a small picture representing their son with his brush and palette.

"I'm going to put it in a wide grey frame," the painter dreamed aloud.

"I don't think," the architect explained with a sneer, "that in a hundred years from now people will be hanging pictures on their walls."

"Absurd!"

"Want to bet?" the architect proposed. "I maintain that in a hundred years there won't be any walls."

In the corner, the Crown Prince yawned into the narrow face of the vegetarian. "Nevertheless, I say 'No!'"

"You're hopeless!" the vegetarian almost screamed.

"Quiet! Or we'll have the police on our necks!"

"Here? Impossible!" the painter said. "The police can never come here! You can roar as loud as you like. And if anyone should ever need a hiding place, he can come here. Here it's safe."

He said it as a joke.

But the joke soon became a reality.

Good Times for Lovers

IT was autumn. Seen from the hill, the river looked like a thread. It was a little river. It was a little town. It had sixty thousand inhabitants. I knew many of them. And I knew every street, every alley, every corner of the place.

I sat on a bench in the city park. The park, the hill, the trees, the smell of the earth—all that was familiar to me. I was at home here. And down below, in the town, I was at home too. From here I saw Castle Street, where I had lived a few years before. Other people lived there too: simple people, stupid people, drunkards, honest folk, scoundrels—all of them could be found in Castle Street. And in the midst of all these people lived my father. . . . I had seen him today, talked with him, and he had spoken only of his misfortunes. That is, he had scarcely spoken at all, he had been silent most of the time. But I understood this language too well. I hadn't forgotten it yet. I knew Father and understood everything he was silent about.

As I sat facing him today, an absurd thought came into my mind: all of a sudden I wished that my family had a home of its own where I might pass a few hours from time to time, and spend the night in my old room, sleeping in the bed where I had slept as a child. . . . This sudden overwhelming longing was ridiculous. I had never had the luxury of a separate room in my childhood; nor a bed for myself, or anything like a child's bed. Until the age of fourteen I slept with Herman in a wide, wooden bed that Father had bought second-hand. Later Herman was given a narrow metal bed in our bedroom. . . .

"What are you thinking about?"

"Nothing particular," I lied.

Father spoke of his worries. "I need a thousand marks. With a thousand marks I could save the firm, I could go on. With just one thousand marks I could pay a few bills and buy some new merchandise. I must get two or three overcoats; winter is not far off, and I haven't a single overcoat in stock."

Unfortunately, I didn't possess a thousand marks.

"Anything less won't help me," Father said regretfully. "I figured it out exactly, and I found that I need a thousand marks, no more, but really no less."

Now I went downhill, toward the town. The leaves on the ground had once been on the branches. Once there had been a sunny spring, and then the leaves had been tiny little green shoots. The rain had sprinkled them, then summer had come, hot and dry, then autumn, the life of the leaves had run its course, they had fallen, now they were lying on the ground, I was walking on them. The ground was wet and cold.

It was autumn, but it seemed absurd to notice it. Who kept track of the seasons nowadays? Nature had ceased to be important. Many other things too. The individual man was no longer important. The town seemed to consist only of marching columns. Some were republican, in grey-green coats and blue caps. Some were Nazis—their coats were brown, their boots were brown, and so were their storm caps. The Communists were distinguished only by their red armbands. In spite of the difference in uniforms, caps, and armbands, many of the marchers had about them the same look of despair, starvation, unemployment, fanaticism. Often, on the same day, hostile groups marched out simultaneously from different quarters of the town and met at the marketplace. All together they surrounded the city hall, shouting "Long live!" and "Down with!" or "We want bread and work!" On each side of the large building stood a different political group shouting the

same demands and the same curses at the closed windows. The police were content to prevent any clash between the marching columns. But a clash was precisely what the demagogues wanted to bring about.

Kupke marched at the head of a group of Nazis. By the time the police appeared, his hooligans had long since disappeared; only their victims remained unconscious on the ground, many with broken noses, and the hands with which they had tried to protect their faces were twisted and bloody. The police were not very active; they had probably got wind of the approaching change and were unwilling to protect the weaker side. Kupke's gang marched singing down the streets, dealing out blows, their songs whipping even the deaf to a frenzy. Little by little the Nazis had succeeded in intimidating the whole town. They made themselves more conspicuous than all their opponents put together. It was clear that they had plenty of money to spend. New flags, new shirts, new riding breeches, new boots, armbands, belts, chin straps, new trumpets, new drums, newspapers, innumerable pamphlets—the Nazis had everything, because they had money. They also had arms. Soon nobody dared to go out alone at night for fear of being attacked.

A fine time for seekers of solitude, a fine time for poets, dreamers, and lovers, this year 1932! Wherever you went you could hear the loudspeakers of the propaganda trucks: Down with democracy! Down with Marxism! Down with the Jews! Down!! Louder! Roar, shout as loud as you can! Down with the existing system! Long live the Third Reich! Long live! Down! Down!! The louder the shouting, the better! Muster all your fury, all your hate, all your contempt against the accursed "system"! All Germany's misfortunes, the war lost fourteen years ago, the inflation, the hollow prosperity, the depression, the unemployment—all that had one clear cause: the "system." Ha! And the Jews, yes, the Jews!! Banners high! Close ranks! The Jews are plotting treason! Beat the Jews! Thrash the Jews! Death to the Jews! Remember

how Jewish Marxists stabbed our valiant victorious soldiers in the back!! The war dead were killed by the Jews! Clear the streets for the brown battalions! Clear the streets for the storm troops! Germany, awake! Germany, awake! Death to the Jews!!!

Day and night, loudspeakers, soapbox orators, choruses, newspapers, pamphlets, posters, gramophone records shouted the same slogans; day and night they hammered into the minds of the German people hatred and rage and vengeance and bitterness, and blood and punishment and murder and assassination—day and night, again and again, day and night, again and again. Hurray! The people are on the march! Hurray! The people are joining up! The people had always marched when the commands were given, when the drums rolled, when there was an enemy to march against! The people had marched from 1914 to 1918! And now the people were on the march again! After the interruption, the march had begun again! Hurray! At last we can march again, hate again, destroy again! This time it's against the internal enemy! Against the internal enemy first! Hurray!! Germany, awake!! Hurra-a-ay!!!!

The "Shark" Has a Good Memory

THEY sat facing each other at their gigantic desk, Willy Linke and Grünfeld, two sphinx-like faces. It was a day like any other, a grey December day in 1932. Not a word was said. Each partner maintained an attitude of tense, impenetrable hardness. They were having financial troubles. Grünfeld persuaded himself that Linke was plotting to throw him out of the firm. That of course was what he would want to do, now in the midst of the depression, so as to be able to pocket all the profits himself! What would he have been without me, this peasant lout? Linke thought that

Grünfeld wanted to get rid of him. That of course was what he would want to do, now in the midst of the depression, so as to be able to pocket all the profits himself! What would he ever have been without me, this Jew from God knows where? . . .

A few months before something had gone wrong. There had been a big row. Each of the partners had voiced his suspicions of the other, they had uttered mutual threats. Shortly afterward, the whole thing proved to have been a ridiculous misunderstanding, but they had never made it up. Everything that had been good and satisfactory was forgotten. Their old friendly relationship was broken just because for a paltry thirty minutes they had distrusted each other. Such was the beginning of the vicious petty war between Linke and Grünfeld. From now on the two partners saw only each other's faults. Both would have liked to dissolve the partnership, but neither said so openly. Each wanted to prove first that the other had always been cheating him, that he had always been a shabby, lowdown, hypocritical, filthy louse, and himself only a trusting, innocent lamb. . . .

Every day at nine o'clock sharp they met in their spacious business quarters. Almost simultaneously they both hurried through the glass door leading to their common private office, one humming a song in an unnaturally shrill voice, the other whistling off key. Each noisily unfolded his newspaper. Each was furious because the other read the newspaper during office hours instead of attending to the incoming mail. Both boiled with rage. Both turned red. Both suddenly stopped humming and whistling. Both, gnashing their teeth, hurled their newspapers away, looked at each other, burning with rage but saying nothing, stood up, and, thus standing, took the newspapers again in their hands, rolled them into balls, and stuffed them in the waste basket. Then both left the private office, almost shoulder to shoulder, and ran through their various offices, with purple faces and heavy hearts.

The telephone rang. The telegraph boy came. Where are the

managers? Not in. Be back in a minute, they're in the next room. Yes, both. Trouble in the air. A new batch of mail was laid on the gigantic desk. Clerks secretly polished their nails. Some of them who had played the lottery and lost whispered that they would play again. Some day they'd draw the right number. Who would like to buy a ticket? Some were telling what they heard the day before at the political meetings: ethical renaissance, revitalization, rebirth, Weimar constitution, Moscow, Centre, Rome, ballot boxes, party uniform, Rightists, capitalism, communism, profiteers, Sozis, free corps, parliament, bombing with five dead, everything a fraud. These words were thrown from table to table like pamphlets, passed on, underlined, opposed gently or passionately, defended hesitantly. The day before, the democratic meeting had been broken up by the Nazis, seventeen seriously wounded, forty arrested, guns and clubs found in the hall, gang of criminals, serves the Democrats right, the Nazis are criminals, if you say that again, you'll see something! See what? I'll give you a couple of smacks in your dirty face! Psst! Quiet . . . !

In the meantime, the two bosses were still running about, boiling with rage. The typewriters clattered. The pens scratched. The heat from the radiators gave the employees headaches. Would you mind if I opened a window? No, the windows must be kept closed! Absolutely! Oho! Open! Keep them closed! Telephone! Not in! The telephone rang again! Herr Linke, where's Herr Linke? Here I am! At last!

What? His wife wants to know if it's raining today, if it's snowing, if she should go out in her fur coat? She's in bed and too lazy to get up. Too lazy to get up and look herself? Herr Linke didn't answer. He hung up. . . .

Beside him, his partner Grünfeld listened distrustfully, almost piercing the receiver with his eyes.

"Who was it?"

"My wife," Herr Linke muttered, rudely, mockingly. Then he noiselessly floated away on his rubber soles, and Grünfeld shuffled

after him. Both staring darkly, they vanished behind the opaque glass door, and sat down again at their gigantic desk. It was a day like any other, a grey December day in 1932.

On Grünfeld's side of the desk there was a letter. A personal letter. A Lithuanian stamp. An unfamiliar handwriting, postmarked Kovno. His mother lived in Kovno. Why this unfamiliar handwriting? Grünfeld was suddenly seized with fear. He stared at the letter, temporizing. He didn't dare at first. Finally he opened it. With cramped fingers, tearing the letter in two as he did so. Then he held the two pieces together. With trembling fingers. Fitting one to the other along the torn edges. He read the first line. Oh! He opened his mouth wide. In anguish. He made an effort to read the second line. He understood. Everything stood still. He didn't close his mouth. There was a rattle in his throat. He struggled for air. He pulled at his expensive necktie. He tore open the collar of his silk shirt. His breath was short and thick. His eyes were burning. Dry and hot.

For a brief moment Willy Linke enjoyed this not unpleasant spectacle, the sudden collapse of his partner. At last he saw the detestable cheat weak and helpless. But then he saw the choking, fleshy face, the waxen colour of his forehead. He was frightened. He rang nervously for the secretary. When the *Fraülein*, smiling coquettishly and equipped with notebook and pencil, pushed open the opaque glass door with her trim foot, Grünfeld had recovered his self-possession. He shook himself like a polar bear, stood up swaying. He dragged himself to the window. He was still breathing hard, but everything was again where it belonged, all the objects in the room and all the feelings within him. He didn't show his face, only his powerful back. He was all alone in the world, and nobody understood him here. Nobody could understand him. She is dead. . . . Dead. . . . *Shema Yisroel*, she is dead. . . . It overpowered him, and he made no resistance. He murmured the sacred phrase three times. He covered his throbbing, sweating

head with his short, stubby fingers. No, not bareheaded. A Jewish son must keep his head covered; she was dead, dead. . . .

"She is dead, Linke," he groaned. "My mother is dead." He took a few deep breaths, straightened his collar, his necktie. "Dead. My mother is dead."

"Did you ring for me?" the secretary chirped.

"What day is today?" Grünfeld yelled at her.

"Saturday," she said, taken aback.

"My coat and hat," he said. He was ashamed of his tears. "My mother is dead," he said, choking. "Why are you looking at me like that?"

Linke accompanied him to the glass door. "I am sorry," he said with an effort. "My sincere sympathy."

"Don't strain yourself!" Grünfeld barked, slamming the door behind him.

When he arrived, the service was almost over. But even if he had known it in advance, he would have come—despite the danger of coming too late. When the door of the former bowling alley opened, and he entered, huge, massive, in his broad-belted grey overcoat, his hands deep in the immense pockets, the poor Eastern Jews couldn't believe their eyes. They stared at Grünfeld as though he were the Messiah in person. Only once before had Grünfeld been in this Eastern Jewish *schul*, thirteen years ago. At that time he had endowed it with a *torah*, and then his presence had seemed justified. But this time he came in, all covered with snow, without previous announcement. He just came in, dropped heavily onto the nearest seat without greeting anyone, and pushed his hat to the back of his head. His skin was grey. He had changed greatly. His face seemed twisted and lined. Today his eyes had nothing of the "shark" in them as they stared lifelessly from his ravaged face.

He hung his head and listened. After the final prayer had been

recited, he stood up and went over to the bare east wall. Seen from behind, his grey overcoat made him look like an elephant. He recited the prayer for the dead. Many, many years earlier, as a boy of nine, he had recited *Kaddish* after his father's death. And now he stood here for his mother and again recited the prayer for the dead—without halting, from memory, sentence, after sentence, he hadn't forgotten a single word. It was almost uncanny—after all, that had been half a century ago. How many things had happened to him during that half-century! His life had changed from top to bottom. The former Jewish boy of Ponieviezh had become a successful businessman. Nothing had fallen into his lap. He had had to struggle and learn. He had had to learn numerous, unbelievably numerous things, before he had succeeded in reaching his present position, by shrewdness and ruthlessness. Nobody had made things soft for him, no rich uncle in Germany, no influential friends. The friends of his youth were all in Lithuania, as well as uncles, all of them poor. But he had brought to Germany his brains. He had known how to use them. He always thought before acting. He had understood at an early age the absurdity of human affairs. He had taken fright at the discovery that, in the eyes of the world, a man who stole a one-mark piece was a thief, but that a man who stole a million was a financial genius. He had sat down and studied word for word the laws that stood in his way and the laws which might be useful to him. He had learned to read a man's face like the pages of a book. He had learned how to string a net for ensnaring the weak, and he had learned how to tear through the meshes that others spun for him. He feared nothing. He never trembled. He made others tremble. He destroyed his enemies cold-bloodedly and without remorse. He was happy to think that no one could destroy him.

It must be acknowledged that he had not wasted his time. He had come west to make a fortune and he had achieved his goal. He had proved his mettle. He was not one of those old Eastern Jews who, even here in Germany, beat their breasts, crying: "Next year in

Jerusalem!"; nor was he one of those young Eastern Jewish idealists who in the new country still wasted their time in dreams and speculations, studying Marx just as their ancestors had studied the Talmud. . . . Grünfeld hadn't wasted his time on religion or other unprofitable occupations. He was interested only in what paid interest. He stood firmly by this principle. He knew only one problem: "What can I earn in this business? How much money will this idea bring me?" His money—that was his whole secret. With money you could do everything, acquire everything and forget everything. But the *Kaddish* prayer that he had said fifty years before for his father—that he had not forgotten. He now recited it from memory for his mother. What an absurd memory! He was full of admiration for himself.

He left the *schul*. Yossel Fishman walked beside him. A poor Jew and a wealthy Jew, both from the East. The weather, Grünfeld said, sniffing, was uncertain. He was afraid it might snow again. He drew in his head, and let it sink into his thick coat collar.

In Fishman's apartment, in Castle Street, Grünfeld took a glass of brandy. He took a piece of honey cake. Then he ate carp, in pungent jellied sauce.

"In her worst hour she was alone," he reproached himself, smacking his lips. He licked each bone. "She died alone, and I wasn't able to be at her side. Why didn't I bring her over here to stay with me? But did she want to come? She didn't. I wrote her about it often enough, and I asked her personally when I went to Kovno the year after the war. But she refused; she insisted on staying in Kovno. At that time she was already half blind. I went to a hotel and from there, in a cab, to her house. She was sick in bed. She hadn't mentioned it in her letter; she didn't want to worry me. And suddenly I was in her room. First she refused to believe that I was her son. But then I had to sit down on her bed and tell her about the world and how the Jews were doing everywhere. All night I had to talk to her. She didn't let me go back to

the hotel. She didn't let me sleep and she didn't want to sleep herself so long as I was there. In fifty years I had seen her only once. She was an old Jewish mother, and I a Jewish son who went abroad to make his fortune. She was afraid of foreign countries. She didn't believe there was any happiness for Jews outside of Kovno. And now she is dead."

Yossel Fishman, to comfort him, said in Hebrew that God does everything for the best.

Grünfeld ventured to disagree. "But let's talk about earthly matters," he proposed. "How are you doing?"

"Business is bad," Fishman lamented. "My customers buy on the instalment plan; they take the merchandise, pay two instalments, and then stop. The merchandise is gone, the customer is gone, it's terrible! I'll have to close my store unless a miracle happens."

"There are no miracles," muttered Grünfeld.

"All I need," Fishman assured him anxiously, "is a thousand marks. With a thousand marks I could get on my feet again."

"On your feet? On your feet again?" Grünfeld looked at little Fishman with pity. "A thousand marks will put you on your feet again?"

"If I don't get the money, everything is lost," Yossel Fishman groaned. "Do you know of anyone who would lend me this sum?"

"I'll think it over," smiled Grünfeld. "Maybe something will come to my mind." He poured himself another glass of brandy, and cut himself another slice of honey cake. "Linke wants the whole business for himself," he said, toying with his knife. "A real cut-throat, Linke." He looked at Fishman inquiringly, and Fishman nodded in agreement. "He's a Nazi now, too, and he thinks I don't know it. He's giving them secret contributions. Secret! As if it could escape me! He wants to get rid of me and pocket everything himself. He's only waiting for the Third Reich."

"The Nazis will never take power," Yossel Fishman assured his guest. "Here in this house there are many who've been taken

in by this madness, but they won't succeed. Frau Schaller, who lives in one of the rear apartments, recently told me the Left parties will defend the Republic to the last man."

"And you believe that?" Grünfeld asked angrily. "The Left has been dead in Germany since 1930. It was always dead!"

"Don't misunderstand me," Yossel Fishman hastily apologized. He was poorer than a full-time workman, but he had to prove quickly to his rich guest that he too, like a real big manufacturer, looked with contempt on the workers' organizations. This was no lie. Fishman had the usual lower middle-class prejudice. He had been for a long time under the influence of mass propaganda and he feared the Red menace. Every day the other menace warned him against it.

Grünfeld let him talk. He was silent himself. Yossel Fishman finally overreached himself in his zealous attempt to prove to Grünfeld that he—God forbid—was not a Red, and he spoke almost like a Nazi. Against the Reichstag, against the Republic, against the selfish Left parties.

"Don't be so fierce," Grünfeld shook his head compassionately. "Soon you'll be shouting like the others: 'The Jews are the curse of Germany.'"

Yossel Fishman gasped for breath.

"Come to see me Monday," Grünfeld said wearily, and he stood up. "I will give you the thousand marks. No, don't thank me," he interrupted Fishman, who was stammering his gratitude. "It won't do you much good. I'm afraid it's too late. If you were younger, I'd advise you to leave the country. Just look at the faces in the streets. We're living in the midst of thieves and murderers. And should they get to power, your Frau Schaller won't be able to save you, any more than my thousand marks. But you'll get them. I don't need them, anyway. Soon I won't need anything. Good *Shabbes*."

Book 6

A NATION AWAKES

The Great Day

THE news was so unexpected, so surprising. Everybody was stunned. At first people refused to believe it. But when no further doubt was possible, they began to shout with joy.

It was on a Monday, a cold wet Monday. The sun was hidden. The grey skies threatened snow. Rascher was smoking. He looked at his watch. It was nearly two o'clock. Marie was saying how much she wished it were summer, with its warmth and vacation days. Fräulein Erna was serving the coffee. At the next table sat Herr Huster and Fräulein Patzig, drinking German peppermint tea with hostility and conviction—their hostility was for us, their conviction for their tea. The third chair at their table was unoccupied. Fräulein Nachtigall had gone to her room to listen to the radio. The tenor Enrico, whose name was not Enrico, was playing cards with his wife, as always after lunch.

"Next week I'm going to the mountains, now that the snow has finally come," Rascher said, showing us pictures in the newspaper. We knew that he was going to meet his former wife, to be happy for half a day and then have another row with her.

"Wouldn't it be nice if it were July and we were all sitting in the Golden Anchor?" Marie dreamed aloud. The three of us had spent a week's vacation at the Golden Anchor—it was only a few months ago, but it seemed years. We lay around in the meadows, doing nothing, just looking at the sky, at the clouds, at the line separating the mountain ridge and the blue sky. "I don't see any line," Marie had said. "Look carefully, over there," I had replied. "There is no line; it's an illusion," Rascher murmured. We lay in the shade; before us lay the lake in the gleaming sunlight.

We dreamed of always living like that, all our lives. A frog jumped into the water, and we laughed and sighed at the same time. Neither Rascher nor I had shaved for four days, and we both had soft beards. Marie told us that she loved us even so, and out of sheer love we had promised to shave next morning. I had kept my word, but not Rascher. In the fragrant silence of the inn, bees buzzed around the alluring honey crock, around the mountain of butter and the fresh rolls from the near-by village. Later we lay lazily on deck-chairs, humming songs, whistling, falling asleep, waking up again; we ran through the meadow, we went rowing on the lake, we swam, we went hiking in the mountains, we picnicked by mountain torrents. Then we had regretfully packed our suitcases; we'd be back next year, we told our hosts, we had liked it so much, it had been so wonderful. . . .

"But it's only January," Marie said regretfully.

"January 30, to be exact," Rascher said.

At a little table in the middle of the dining room, where everybody could see him, sat the false but handsome, too handsome, Herr Schön. He ate alone and in silence. His only company was his necktie. He kept making sure, repeatedly and regularly, that the knot was where it should be. Every morning Herr Schön, travelling salesman for Solingen hardware, left his messy shaving things in the bathroom used by all of us. Every Saturday night a girl friend visited him—each week a new one—asking: "Is Herr Schön, my fiancé, at home? He wrote to say that he'd expect me this evening." And Fräulein Erna, serving us our after-lunch coffee that Monday, whispered to us: "Today there's a new one in the picture frame by his bed."

And then Fräulein Nachtigall entered the dining room. Clearly, something had happened, for she did not slink in as usual, but rushed toward Huster in a flurry, and whispered something in his ear. Her face was burning, her eyes rolling wildly. And Huster jumped up as though he had been sitting on a spring. Fräulein

Patzig jumped up too, transfigured, brushing her lemon-yellow hair back from her forehead. Huster seized a coffee spoon, knocked it against his cup of peppermint tea, and announced exultantly:

"He is Reich Chancellor!"

The news was too much for his voice, which broke down as he tried to pronounce the title.

Everybody stared at him as though he had spoken Chinese.

Rascher whispered to me: "That's impossible! Huster has gone crazy." I felt all my blood rushing to my head.

Frau Moll's mealy face floated across the dining room toward Huster's table. Her bosom was heaving. Her eyes were colourless. With both hands she pressed her round glasses to her inexpressive nose.

"Are you joking?" she asked with her sweet and sour smile. "How do you know?"

There was deep silence in the dining room.

Fräulein Nachtigall's cry cut through that silence: "My radio! And now I'm going to call up the Brown House!" she announced in a tone implying that she was about to communicate with God in person.

Everyone made way for her with deference. All eyes followed her as she walked with firm tread to the telephone. She asked for a number; she had no need to look it up in the book, she knew that number by heart. She waited. We all waited. Then she shouted her war cry.

"Heilt! Nachtigall speaking! Yes? . . . I just heard it over the radiol!" Fräulein Nachtigall cried joyfully. "So it's authentic? . . . I am so happy! . . . He's *everything* to me! I have his picture in my room! When I look at him I feel in my heart how great he is! I have never lost my faith in him!" Her voice shook. She was almost weeping. "As a child I used to dream about God. Now I dream about the Führer! I even talk to him! Every night!

In my dreams, naturally!" She sighed. . . . She cried jubilantly: "He's splendid! . . . He's marvellous! So the news is really authentic? . . . Many, many thanks! Heiltla!"

She hung up, and turned toward us. Her face had a roseate gleam. She surveyed the tables. Each table separately. Then, proud as a bank clerk who had just received an incredible Christmas bonus, she announced:

"It is authentic!"

Instantly the tension was released. Everybody shouted at once. They probably didn't know why, but they felt compelled to roar, to yell, to do something! Only our table was like a spot of oil on the surface of a stormy lake. No, also the table of the Löwensteins, an old couple. Huster seized the teacup and, like a hysterical child, hurled it to the floor. Fortunately the cup was empty, but unfortunately it was made of china. Frau Moll and Fräulein Erna screamed, Herr Schön pulled at his necktie in embarrassment, then his hand vanished into his trouser pocket, a penknife came to light, then another penknife, then a screw-driver, then a can-opener (all Solingen hardware!)—and then all at once, a swastika shone on his necktie. He approached Huster and, bowing politely to the jubilant ladies, introduced himself as "an old militant." Purzel was barking with joy. The tenor went to the piano. It was locked. "The key!" he demanded heroically. "Here!" Frau Moll, moved almost to tears, gave it to him. The tenor sat down; he was a heavy, slow man. His hands fell weightily on the piano keys. He began to sing: "Clear the streets for the brown battalions! Clear the streets for the storm troopers!" His wife interrupted him: "Enrico, please, three tones lower!" He gave her a disapproving glance and began again. One after another joined him. Beate Stock, the nurse, sobbed hysterically and looked around in a stupor, murmuring: "I am so glad! I am so glad!" Purzel jumped with enthusiasm from table to table. Rascher lured him to us with a piece of sugar. Herr and Frau Löwenstein stood up, looked sadly at each other, and went silently toward the door. When the song

was over, the singers didn't know exactly what to do. Anyway, they were a little breathless and feverish, and they needed a rest.

Fräulein Erna had gathered up the broken china cup in her apron. She summed up her joy over the singing: "I am so moved! Hi! Now I can really feel that I have a heart!"

"Give me the key to the piano!" Frau Moll said coldly to the tenor, who was about to begin a second song. "One song is quite enough! The piano tuner is expensive!"

Little Herr Moll made his way to Huster. He smiled bashfully. "As a matter of fact, I too am an old supporter of your movement."

"Cut it out!" his wife ordered him. "We're not alone!" She meant us.

Rascher lit a cigarette and began to soliloquize. At first he spoke softly, but soon everyone in the dining room could hear his words. The subject of this monologue was the careerists and turncoats who, at every change of regime, couldn't wait to jump on the band-wagon. "It is true," he began, and everybody listened, "it is true that the nurse doesn't feel quite comfortable. Just look at her. She is still a little in doubt. After all, she knows nothing about the party except that it has won. Her bewilderment is understandable."

The nurse pressed her handkerchief to her sobbing mouth and left the room, head high.

"Today many a filthy soul is revealed!" Rascher said loudly, contemptuously. "Such as Herr Schön, Solingen hardware."

"And our famous tenor," I said politely.

"Keep our names out of this," both gentlemen said together, nervously.

"All right, Herr Schön," said Rascher. "We won't speak about present company. But all this festive joy is inspiring to me as well as disgusting!" He rose from his seat and made a bow. "This is the beginning of prosperous times for psychopaths, traitors, renegades, for people without character and brains," he lectured softly.

"I don't want to step on anybody's toes, so please don't think I am referring to you. Once there was an adventurer, and he chose German politics as his field of operation. And as the government of this country allowed him to do it, he formed a gang composed of many disreputable elements. This gang was not molested, either, and it grew steadily. A country like Germany, after a military defeat, contains a great number of bankrupt, stupid, unprincipled, worthless people, all of them failures, ready to be attracted by a gang leader who apparently has money, success, and influential backers. And now this gang leader has become the head of our government. And you are exulting, because you don't realize what great misfortune has stricken our country today!"

Huster came to our table. He looked at Rascher with studied calm, but his voice shook with anger. "I will have you thrown into jail! You are insulting our Führer! . . . You are a witness!" he added in a commanding voice, turning to Herr Schön, who stood behind him.

Herr Schön, flattered, nodded assent. Then of a sudden he seemed to grasp what was expected of him. He convulsively seized his necktie, as a point of support. "I am ready," he murmured indistinctly: "I will swear to anything."

"I congratulate you on having secured the services of this gentleman," said Rascher laughingly to Huster, who was trembling with rage.

Red as a turkey, Herr Schön stammered: "I am really an old militant! The large swastika in the toilet on the third floor, it was I who painted it! More than two weeks ago!"

"So it was you!" Herr Moll exclaimed.

"On my good wallpaper!" Frau Moll protested. "Was that necessary?"

"Maybe it really was necessary," little Herr Moll ventured to contradict his wife. "These gentlemen understand politics better than we do." The former clown had but to open his mouth, and it was hard to keep a straight face.

Then Huster began to abuse me, the German Jews, world Jewry. "We'll wipe out all the Jews! And we'll begin with you!" he promised.

"Think it over," I quieted him.

"What we are going to do is none of your business," he said peremptorily.

"If you want to wipe me out, it does concern me a little!"

"The era of liberalism is over!" Huster replied explosively, reaching for another cup, but this time Frau Moll was quicker than he. "Our plans concerning the Jews are the concern of us Germans, not you Jews!"

"That would suit you!" I said.

"Heiltla!" Nachtigall cried, raising her right arm.

"Heiltla!" cried Huster, cried Patzig, cried the tenor, cried—quite timidly—Herr Moll. All stretched their right arms in the air. In that moment they could think up no better way of showing their hostility toward me.

We left the dining room—Marie, Rascher, and I. On the third floor we could still hear the growling of the pack.

We were about to enter our rooms when we noticed Herr Ignaz Löwenstein standing at the other end of the corridor. He beckoned us to join him.

The Löwensteins were quiet little old people who lived on a small monthly allowance from their children. Formerly they had owned a leather-goods store, but they had lost everything in the depression and had even been compelled to sell their house to pay their creditors. Now they lived here in Moll's boarding house. The boarders hadn't really noticed them until one day in 1932, when Herr Löwenstein had complained in the dining room that some "Nazi boor, young enough to be my son, but who isn't," thank God, hadn't answered his greeting. Until that day only this was known about the Löwensteins: if the door to their room happened to be left ajar in the morning he was seen reading the paper in his lavender underwear, while she was busy with her

dachshund. The Nazi boor who hadn't answered his greeting was Huster. Huster avenged himself for the old man's remark by announcing loudly that "Jews who slaughter Christian children for Easter cannot insult me." Again old Löwenstein had felt injured. He had to clear himself of this hideous accusation. When Huster told this story of the ritual murders to his two table companions, Fräulein Erna was just serving meat balls. Herr Ignaz Löwenstein stood up, stroked his snow-white moustache, and declared in a deep, dignified voice that, as a former German reservist, he would like to address a few words to young people whose minds were inflamed by agitators. Nothing was a greater torment to mankind than politics, with the sole exception of war, he assured Frau Moll's boarders. No natural catastrophe can bring more disaster upon men than men themselves, with their ambition, their lust for power, their group hatreds, their race hatreds, all their filthy politics. What he said was clear, and the result of careful thinking. The black plague, he said, banging his fist on the table, was merciful compared with the brown plague that was now sweeping Germany. . . .

By threats and interruptions, the Huster-Patzig-Nachtigall constellation prevented the old man from further developing his ideas. His own wife was against his going on.

"You only get them excited," she begged him softly. "Sit down and eat your meat balls. They're getting cold."

From then on, Herr Ignaz Löwenstein often felt impelled to address the young people whose minds were inflamed by agitators. But his wife always held him back.

It was very hard for him to keep silent. But in the presence of his wife he never spoke again. His increasing bitterness, however, was clearly noticeable. In the last months of 1932, no matter what subject was under discussion, you could always be sure that he would express opinions full of dark colours.

"Ah, well! All life is grey!" he said when the conversation was about the weather and the grey skies.

"Ah, well! The future is black!" he said when the conversation was about black coffee. "And the cause of all our misery is politics!"

And now the two old people stood before us.

"We're leaving the boarding house," Herr Löwenstein said. "You have heard the news that he has become Reich Chancellor. Black days are ahead of us!"

"Brown ones!" said Rascher.

"We are going to Nürnberg, to our daughter's," said the old lady. "In a large town you feel less anti-Semitism than in a little place like this." And she added softly, turning to me: "He feels very unhappy here. But he won't be any better in Nürnberg."

"Why do you talk about Nürnberg!" Herr Löwenstein cried. "I am not going to Nürnberg! Our other daughter is married in Danzig. I want to go to Danzig!"

"And how would you like Vienna?" Frau Löwenstein asked anxiously.

"Right!" Herr Löwenstein exclaimed. "Our youngest daughter, Anni, lives there; she's married to an Austrian, a well-known nose specialist!" the old man said proudly. "Doctor Levy—maybe you have heard the name?"

"Oh, yes," said Marie. She made an effort to conceal her tears.

"In Austria," Herr Löwenstein said with assurance, "we won't meet any Husters. There at least we'll be left in peace."

Flight to Berlin

MARIE will never forget that day. It was two weeks later. She was suddenly torn from sleep. She heard the sound of many footsteps on the stairs. She knew at once that it was another search. They had already searched the house two days before, but Jacob

and Rascher had not been found. Now they were probably trying a second time. But they wouldn't succeed, she thought with joy. She listened for five minutes, then she heard the steps approaching her room. There were knocks at her door. Two hard blows.

"Police! Open at once!"

It was six o'clock in the morning.

"The door is not locked," she said.

When the door opened, she saw brown uniforms outside. Also two policemen. Huster came in. Marie remained in bed.

"Where are they?" Huster said harshly. "We have definite knowledge that both are in town."

"Then you know more than I do," she said.

Of course she knew that their quarry had found a refuge less than five minutes distant from Moll's boarding house. Jacob was sheltered by the painter in his studio, and Rascher was hiding with the painter's parents, who lived in the same house, two floors below. It was a respectable apartment house. Of the ten tenants, six were registered members of the Nazi party. But Marie was sure that Huster had no idea where the two were hiding.

"Tell the truth!" he thundered.

"You have no right to shout like that in my room," she said calmly.

"I am Assistant Chief of Police!"

"Since when?"

"Since yesterday," he said, proudly showing a card with a photograph bearing his own signature.

"Congratulations," she said.

He left without having accomplished anything.

She knew that Jacob was in an irritable mood, that it wasn't easy for the painter to have him about.

"I know I'm inconveniencing you," Jacob kept saying.

"You're not disturbing me in the slightest," the painter always answered. And it was true: he was not disturbed at all. He was

intensely preoccupied with himself. He was painting a new self-portrait, employing, for a change, only varying tones of green. As he worked, he repeated gossip from the Café Megalomania.

"The architect is now a Nazi," he said, attacking the right eye.

"Impossible!" Jacob cried.

"And Prolet too," the painter said.

"Ah, well!" Jacob laughed bitterly. "Don't tell me the Crown Prince has gone Nazi too!"

"No, but the vegetarian has," said the painter, calmly laying a green shadow on the right cheek.

Jacob lay on the couch, watching him. "That's a field, not a face," he said acidly.

"Don't worry, things will change again," said the painter, comfortingly. "Of course, you're bored cooped up here for days, unable to go out." He set a tuft of dark green hair above the pale green forehead. Then he painted a frame of the same dark green around the yellow-green chin and the grey-green left side of his nose. "The Café Megalomania has been ordered to change its name." He splashed two spots on the face. "Warts," he explained.

Jacob was angry. "You have no warts!" he cried.

"No, I haven't," the painter admitted with a smile. "But they don't look bad on my self-portrait." He cast a friendly glance at Jacob. "Here are cigarettes, and here's a drink." He poured one for himself too. "To your health! And don't think too much. Just drink and sleep! You will need your nerves later."

"My nerves are in perfect order," said Jacob, bristling. Then he laughed uneasily. "Is it really true? The architect and the other two?"

"Yes, it is," the painter said. "But what of it? A couple of idiots more or less in the brown front. . . ."

"I don't believe it!"

"If it makes you feel better not to believe it, then don't believe it!" the painter said. "So you don't like the warts?"

"You might just as well sprinkle your face with freckles!"

"Excellent idea! I'll try it," the painter said joyfully.

He mixed a dose of poisonous green and enthusiastically sprinkled innumerable bright little dots on his portrait.

"A green meadow with thistles." Jacob shook his head disapprovingly.

"My next picture," the painter said seriously, "will be entirely brown. A man with a swastika. It has already been ordered. By the Brown House."

"You're crazy!"

"Yes."

And then Marie came in. Embarrassed, averting her eyes, she sat down by his side.

"How are you?" she inquired. "There is something I've got to tell you," she continued hastily, without waiting for his answer. "I've just learned who my father is." She laughed nervously. Then she quickly jumped to another subject. "Nobody must know that we're still friends." She seemed bewildered. "Aunt Moll will have a heart attack if she finds out that I am still seeing you. Huster threatened to arrest anybody who has any contact with you. Uncle, Aunt, the whole boarding house has now joined the Nazis. And yesterday Uncle Moll confessed to me that he is not my uncle, but my father. Do you believe that? At any rate, he has become a Nazi. I must be very cautious now. You can understand that, can't you?" she inquired anxiously. She turned white and red, and white again. She looked away.

He sat on the edge of the sofa, one leg stretched out, as though about to jump. He did not jump.

"You must go away," she stammered. "They came to my room this morning."

"They questioned you?" he asked diffidently.

"It was Huster. He won't give us a moment's peace till he finds you and Rascher. I've already spoken to Rascher." She was quietly weeping.

He didn't even notice it! "What is Rascher going to do?"

"He is going to Berlin tonight. He wants you to take the same train, but you must sit in a different compartment. Then you can meet at the Anhalt Station. He has friends in Berlin. He agrees with me that neither of you can stay here any longer."

That night Marie came again. The painter left them alone. Only a small lamp was burning in the studio. They stood motionless by the large window. His overcoat lay beside him. She too was dressed to go out. He looked out into the rainy night. He strained his eyes, but he could see nothing of the town. He saw only a dark, dripping roof across the street. He tried to smile. It was only a miserable grimace.

He said hoarsely that he was sure he wouldn't be away for long, that he'd be back soon. Very soon. . . . That was all he was able to say.

She held his overcoat. She thought bitterly: How often he has spoken on the platforms, how often he has spoken to strangers, trying to convince them with floods of words. But now, when he is alone with me, his gift for speech fails him. . . . I must help him. . . .

"Come," she said. She looked like a very little girl with a great grief which she dared not confide. "Come, let's go," she urged. "We must walk to the station. The streetcar isn't safe."

They went. He opened her umbrella. She pressed close to him. It was dark. That was good! Nobody would recognize them.

She was trembling, but of course he wouldn't notice it. As though he ever noticed anything about her! She smiled bitterly. No, there was no need to conceal her feelings. There was no need to control herself. She knew him. He noticed everything, he was interested in everything, he could speak for hours about the parties and their internal struggles, about the fall of the old government and the formation of the new one, about the growing terrorism of the Nazis, about the decomposition of the Left, about

the bureaucratic machine causing the disintegration of the working-class movement, about the devastating effects of the cut in unemployment relief. How often had she sat patiently beside him, he talking and she listening. She had hoped in vain that he would speak about her, but he had never had time for that. When he was done talking, he took notes. And when he had no notes to take, he cut out articles from newspapers. Sometimes he met friends at the Megalomania. With them he talked about future prospects, prospects that took into account everything but love. . . .

"Your train will be leaving in ten minutes," she said softly.

"We must hurry," he said nervously. "And please write to me general delivery. Postoffice SW 68. Ritterstrasse."

"I will write." She sighed, turning away her face. . . .

A few times they had gone to the woods together. She had weak ankles, and it was hard for her to keep up with his pace. He couldn't walk slowly. He was always in a hurry. He never noticed that she wasn't a good walker. He strode ahead of her, talking. He talked to the air! She imagined that his opinions were addressed to her, and that gave her a little pleasure. What was he talking about? Four years ago there had been practically no unemployed in the town, and almost no Nazis, he said reflectively. Now the local Nazis had obtained forty-five percent of the votes. The Republic, he said, was voting itself to death. In 1932 five elections were held in Germany, five elections of misery, despair, sources of constant unrest. . . . "It's a pity that I'm not a statistical number," she had said regretfully during one of these walks. "Then you'd pay much more attention to me." But he hadn't even noticed the remark. Germany, he had exclaimed seriously, was moving toward chaos! . . . Once, in December, she had lost control of herself, she had told him everything that was in her heart. He had stared at her, speechless. Was she reproaching him for his interest in this country's fate? She evaded the question; she was disappointed, frightened. No, she wasn't reproaching him for

anything, he mustn't pay attention to her, she didn't mean that, oh, no.

He didn't understand her, but she understood him well. She understood everything, everything he did. Even his interest in politics she understood. She even admired him for being able to forget himself in it. He always had time for others, but never for himself. "The year 1932 is not a year for private life," he kept repeating. She had never been able to share his preoccupation, she never would be able to, today she felt it quite clearly. . . . Now she was taking him to the train, he was fleeing to Berlin. If he hadn't bothered about politics and Huster, she thought angrily, he wouldn't have been compelled to run away now. At this moment she hated politics. She didn't give a hoot about politics. Let Germany be ruled by anybody who wanted to! What difference did that make to her? She wanted to love, she wanted to be loved, she wanted to be loved by him. But he knew no personal life; probably he had never known it; he didn't know how beautiful it could be.

Once he had told her about his life. It had been a strange life. He had come from a foreign land. He had gone through many experiences that were inconceivable to her. He had no real family of his own, just like her. And yet it was not the same thing. . . . He had told her that he had been driven from his home by his step-mother. She didn't think he would have stayed with his father even if the step-mother had not existed. Once she had been to his father's store and bought some linen. He didn't know anything about that. She had struck up an acquaintance with his father, and could find in him no resemblance to the son she loved. He was a lonely young man, and politics, she felt almost sure, was a compensation for his lack of family life. But why had it never occurred to him that she could give him what he lacked? All attempts to talk to him about it had failed. The very word "family" filled him with deep horror. He was happy when he could study

the graphs of economic trends. He rushed through newspapers, pamphlets, unwieldy scientific volumes. She dreaded these sheets, figures, letters. But he read and wrote and wrote and read—that was his life. . . .

And then the meetings. That phase had begun some time in March 1932. Suddenly he had declared that he, too, must do everything in his power to oppose the rising tide of Nazism. He became a member of the strongest Left party. Six nights of the week he went to the villages, where he spoke in smoky inns, in gymnasiums, in marketplaces, always the same speech, the same phrases. And never seemed to grow tired! Again and again he explained to his audience what they already knew—because those who did not know never came. He himself was aware of that, he even said so; but that didn't matter, he spoke just the same. And in the discussion periods they always asked him the same questions. Was it true that the Socialist Müller in Berlin employed a maid, as the Nazis were saying here in the village? That was a foul thing for a Socialist to do; what was the lecturer's opinion on that subject? . . . And he gave his opinion. Six times a week he said what he thought about the maid, he never tired of talking about the maid, but he never talked about *her*, he only said from time to time: Later, darling, later. . . .

Now they were approaching the station. Three minutes left.

"We'd better say good-bye here," he said. "Nobody must see you with me."

"Raise your collar," she said. "And take good care of yourself," she added gently, very gently.

"I'll be back in a month at the latest," he said. He sounded almost gay, friendly, full of assurance. . . .

She stood under a flickering lantern. The rain poured down. She didn't open her umbrella. A locomotive whistled: his train. She looked at the lighted car windows. Then, once past the freight yards, the train turned north, sweeping around a wide curve, and disappeared.

She walked back. Alone. All alone. The streets were dead. Her face was wet. It was raining hard.

Manhunters

HERMAN FISHMAN was as elated as though he had drawn the winning number in the lottery. He had been sent here from the labour office, one of a group of unemployed. The factory was hiring unskilled workers. He was still unable to be really happy about it. Perhaps this was all a mistake. No, it couldn't be a mistake. They were allowed through the gate, then they were led through many buildings, up many flights of stairs.

In the corridor, outside the employment office, there were benches. They were asked to wait; each was to be called individually. The long, dim corridor in the administration building of the largest machine shop in town impressed them as much as the prospect of being no longer unemployed.

Outside, in front of the window, stood a few small, bare trees, the thin branches drooping and dangling sadly. An early spring rain streaked drearily down the windowpanes. A truck moved into the yard. The man sitting beside Herman coughed. Between them lay a wet cap.

"They say the Reichstag burned down yesterday," the man said.

"I don't know anything about it," Herman said.

"They said it over the radio," the man said.

"I have no radio," Herman said.

"They said they caught the firebug right away."

"Leave us alone with your radio," said the man who was sitting at Herman's left. And he said to Herman: "Don't pay attention to what he says. Don't answer him."

That ended the talk.

He wouldn't earn much as a factory worker, but in any case it would be better than unemployment relief. He didn't care in the least what work they gave him. Once he had been a sales clerk in a department store. That was a dream he had stopped dreaming long ago. Exotic silks, real Chinese shantung, real Japanese pongee—all those were bygones. At present he was a young man without a job. Nobody was interested in his former occupation. Not even himself. Today his knowledge of materials and salesmanship was not worth a pfennig.

Last year he had been glad to find a few odd jobs. For four weeks he had been on the town payroll. With a group of other young men like himself, he had worked with pick and shovel at some repairs in the municipal stadium. Later he had shovelled snow and cleared away underbrush in the city park, eight hours a day, twenty pfennigs per hour, plus meals. His father's heart "ached": his son, formerly head sales clerk with Max Kahn, Inc. working with pick and shovel! But the son's heart didn't ache at all, only his hands ached—it took some time before they were calloused. He became accustomed to physical work. He was fed up doing nothing, and pick and shovel were preferable to idling about town, or sitting at home or in the store—in this store without customers, behind the little shop window with its dummy and three pairs of women's underdrawers. . . .

And now maybe he was going to be taken on! He would be earning money again! Not relief money, no, but real wages for real work, not just part-time jobs for the city! It was high time. True, during these two years of unemployment he had not been reduced, like so many others, to sleeping in the streets. He hadn't made the acquaintance of soup kitchens and free shelters, he hadn't rummaged in garbage cans or spent nights with the Salvation Army, or on a park bench, or in a police station. He lived with his father, he ate with his family, but he hated it, for his parents were having a hard time themselves. Father had to get

the rent for the apartment and the store, he had to worry about his notes, his taxes, he had to support three grown-ups—and hardly a customer entered the store. . . . Now if he could begin to earn something again, he'd pay board as he had used to do, and that would be pleasanter for him as well as for his parents.

When he told his father that he had a steady job in a factory, the old man would surely say: "Did I send you to business school so you could work in a factory?" Father still couldn't accustom himself to the changed times. His situation was getting more and more hopeless, but his ideas were exactly the same as before the depression. . . .

Herman wished the interview were over. He hoped they wouldn't ask him to state his religion. Some firms had dismissed all their Jewish employees as of January 30. If they didn't take Jews here, then all his joy was for nothing.

None of Herman's companions was inclined to talk. The minutes dragged on slowly. Nobody came to call out their names. Perhaps they had been forgotten. But no, that was impossible, they had not been forgotten, they were just being kept waiting. And they were used to it. . . . On their arrival, they had heard the clatter of typewriters. Now they did not hear it any more. Man grows accustomed to everything. There was now only a monotonous humming in their ears. Time stood still in the corridor. Forty pairs of unemployed eyes were staring at the most important door in the world. . . .

All of a sudden Herman lost all self-confidence, all belief that he would be hired here. Had he had the strength, he would have got up and gone. But his strength had left him along with his self-confidence. He sat there staring at the door. That door alone was responsible for his anguish, he felt that very keenly. He could have hacked the door to pieces with an ax and burned it, such was his hatred of these doors.

Like all the other doors in the long corridor, this door behind

which his fate was to be decided had an official look about it. So striking was its officialness, its soullessness, inaccessibility, deafness, blindness, that Herman drew in his head, intimidated, and gave up all hope, although he struggled desperately with his fear. But a familiar office odour came through the panels, almost a continuation of the familiar odour in the hostile labour office. . . . You went into a room where all your enemies seemed to be lying in wait for you. You stood in the doorway, alone, defenceless, waiting until an impatient voice muttered: "What do you want?" That was your cue to stammer: "Are there any jobs, anything, it makes no difference what, anywhere, but I must get a job, I can't stand it any longer, I'll go to pieces, a grown man can't be a drain on his father's pocketbook for ever." You wait all alone at the edge of the bare office, a poor devil without a job, and you beg and pray the official at the desk to understand your position, surely there must be a little job somewhere, please, dear sir, please. . . . The official doesn't answer, and suddenly you realize that he doesn't live in your world at all. Saying no more, you turn and go out. And you have accomplished nothing, nothing at all. The enemy is still there. The door closes. And you think that you'd like to demolish it so as not to see it any more, this door. . . .

And now poor Herman couldn't believe there was anything but disappointment waiting for him behind this other door. He sat there, helpless and uneasy, probably with no clear realization of why he was so helpless and uneasy. . . .

And so, when finally his name was called, he stumbled stoop-shouldered through the doorway. He was no coward, but he was sceptical and weary. There were so many without jobs, and no doubt he would be told that the whole thing had been a misunderstanding, that there was no work for him. . . . "Sorry, it was a mistake, we've nothing for you, perhaps some other time, but we can't promise anything, certainly not today, please go. . . ." You must keep cool at such moments, Herman resolved when he heard his name called. . . .

Only when he was once more out in the street, with the sooty factory walls behind him, the sky and the clouds above him, only when he took a deep breath and looked at the slip of paper gripped convulsively in his hand, only then did he believe in the miracle. He had a job! A real job! A steady job! He was no longer unemployed!

He walked toward the town slowly, pondering; he had to get used to the wonderful feeling. His steps grew surer, quicker. The rain had stopped. He was no longer poor, jobless Herman Fishman! He had been accepted! Up to the last moment he had refused to believe it. What exactly had happened in the office? He didn't know. He had no recollection of all the questions he had been asked and all the answers he had given. He had been so nervous! It's not so simple, getting a job! No, he hadn't been mistaken! He held the slip in his hand, he could begin the next morning! The next day was Wednesday, March 1. He was dreaming. All that was written on the slip of paper. Now he would have an occupation, he'd have no more to do with the labour office! Had they told him what kind of work he'd be doing? Ah, the kind of work didn't matter a bit! The main thing was that he had a job!

A job! Already his step was firmer than an hour before. He no longer dragged himself aimlessly through the streets. Once again he moved like a self-assured young man who knows what he wants. He moaned with pleasure, thinking of the next day. Now he would go straight to the store and tell his father the unexpected news. He had not told him anything about the appointment in the factory. Now, with everything sure, he could talk. "Well? Guess what! I have a job!" That's what he would say when he entered the store.

He was impatient to announce the good news, and he quickened his step. That was too bad, for it led him straight into the marching column of Nazis. Had he walked more slowly, the column would not have been in Kaiserstrasse, and nobody would have noticed him. But he was in such a hurry, he was so full of joy. . . .

When he turned into Kaiserstrasse he came face to face with the marching column. He tried to dodge them, to run into a side street, but it was too late. They had already seen him. One of them let out a yell: "A Jew!" And immediately a whole pack of them attacked him and dragged him off the sidewalk into the street.

They were at least thirty, and he was alone. Civilians quickly gathered on the sidewalk. Most of them wore swastikas. Arms flew high in the Nazi salute. Calls resounded: "Give it to him! Beat him up! Heiltla!"

Herman fought with his elbows, feverishly looking for a way out of the circle. In vain. He was surrounded. What did they want of him? Thirty against one! They raised blackjacks, whips, rubber truncheons! He couldn't believe that they would beat him! The idea of calling for help did not occur to him. Who could have helped him? He saw only spiteful, twisted, sadistic faces—nowhere a human expression. For a moment he saw Frau Pilz of Castle Street—Frau Pilz, Feivel's landlady—then she disappeared. When he finally cried out, it was no longer any use, and probably it wouldn't have been any use had he cried out immediately, before they began to hit him. The first blow—on the shoulder—was with something made of steel. A dull thud struck his skin, the bone, his left arm, all his limbs, his heart! He cowered with a groan, raised his other arm to protect his face. Now innumerable blows rained on him. After the first blow he had again tried to reach a house only five yards distant. He saw an open door, windows, empty flower pots, a shop sign, a flagstaff. He had managed to cover about half the distance when somebody tripped him, and he fell. When they saw him lying on the ground they thrashed him pitilessly, roaring like cattle. The blows had a dull sound, and the Nazis tried hard to drown his whimpers by puffing and blowing. And the spectators on the sidewalk shouted like demons: "Beat him up! The coward! The Jewish pig!"

There was a dark rumbling in his head. His eyes saw the wheels of a streetcar! Children's legs running! Life was going on! His

heart was rushing along a mad, endless labyrinth, a blind alley suddenly opened before him, but his heart had to keep rushing on, it couldn't stop! He lost consciousness. . . .

When the Nazis noticed that their victim no longer stirred, they stopped beating him, but seemed unperturbed by his state. They stood around him, waiting for the human bundle to move. One of them had a brilliant idea. He ran into a house, came back at once holding a pail, and threw a few quarts of icy water over his head.

Still holding their blackjacks, they looked on, with a sort of professional curiosity, to see how the cowardly Jewish pig would come to. He opened his eyes. As he made no attempt to get up by himself, they helped him back to his feet, leaned him against a lamppost. And so poor Herman stood, his face battered, a continuous trickle of blood running from his cheek down his neck, his arms dangling powerless from his body. His head hung forward; he was paralysed by a great inner despair that nobody could see—perhaps God alone, but who knows that? . . .

Suddenly someone was holding up a cardboard sign. With a piece of twine it was hung around the Jew's neck. He didn't resist. His eyes expressed neither hatred nor fear. They were quite small and rigid, they were almost invisible, hidden in his swollen face. That face had no longer anything in common with young Fishman. And his suit was now like the suit of a drunkard who has rolled in the mud. The collar of his shirt was torn. And somebody hung his necktie over his shoulder like a rope. The same Nazi who had previously conceived the brilliant idea of the ice-cold water now wrote with blue chalk on the yellow cardboard: "DEATH TO JEWISH CAPITALISM! DOWN WITH THE JEWISH REICHSTAG BURNERS!"

"And now let's walk him through the town. On with you, Jew!" he cried.

As Herman didn't seem to understand at once what was asked of him, they gave him a push. To prevent him from falling, two

Nazis took him between them and held him upright. Then the column began to march. A man tottered in its midst. On both sidewalks a fanatical mob shouted enthusiastically:

"Heiltla! Hang him! Death to the Jews! Heiltla! Heiltla!"

The Nazis grinned with satisfaction.

All in all, there were less than a thousand Nazi sympathizers on the sidewalks. The remaining fifty-nine thousand inhabitants of the city were not to be seen.

Nor the police.

Whenever the door opened, all started at once. They knew, they could hear, that a new prisoner was being pushed into the room. But who the new one was they did not know, for they were not allowed to move.

Now Herman Fishmen too stood there. His face to the wall. His hands folded on his head. In his mouth the bitter taste of blood. He had a terrible, burning pain in his left arm. When he had attempted to let his arm hang down, they had struck him behind the knees until he collapsed. He lay by the wall like a half-crushed mouse. But not for long. Only half a minute. They stepped on him again and again, systematically, regularly, now on his back and now on his left shinbone. They ordered him briefly: "Get up, Jew!" Then he stood up moaning, raised his bloody hands, folded them on his head, tried to stand upright.

"That's fine!" scoffing voices praised him.

He trembled. He couldn't do anything about his trembling. He hoped they didn't notice it. Only not to be beaten again! He closed his eyes. That hurt too, burned like fire! His eyelids were swollen. His whole face was swollen. His skin was taut. It felt as though it would split. It was burning. Everything was burning. His skin was on fire. He opened his eyes again. He saw the white wall! A mountain about to bury him! He abruptly closed his eyes again, because he couldn't stand the sight of the white wall. But he opened them at once, because he grew dizzy and it was forbidden

to fall! Anyone who fell was lashed with horse-whips. Anyone who moved was beaten. He could not move. No, he didn't want to fall! If only he could stop trembling. . . . He couldn't push his hair away from his forehead. . . . The sticky hair was driving him crazy. . . . If only he didn't have this hair! . . .

One of the prisoners cried suddenly:

"I am a teacher in the *Realgymnasium*! I demand a hearing! I protest against my arrest! I want to be heard!"

Something whistled in the air, a blow followed, a shrill inhuman yell, many blows, many yells, a body fell to the ground near Herman, writhing; the whips were hitting flesh, clothing. Yells, prayers. . . .

"Now you've been heard!" somebody roared.

And another one snapped: "You'll be sorry if you turn around!"

Then the room was silent again. Nothing could be heard except the anxious breath of forty prisoners. Tortured, beaten, threatened men. And their torturers were marching up and down. Hobnailed boots . . . the steps kept your blood pounding, almost burst your veins.

Time lost all meaning. When the door was pushed open, their hearts pounded in a frenzy, their bodies remained where they were. When the door was closed, their knees jerked, their hearts abruptly stopped.

A new prisoner! Who? If only you could turn around! No, seeing would be worse! "No! No!" New groans, blows, moans. Then again waxen, anguished silence. There was no end to life. Beneath their feet the floor was rocking. The air was rocking. Their breath was hot and dry. Thirst. The ceiling threatened to fall! The wall was moving—tilting forward, backward, forward again, backward again! The main thing was not to fall! The wounds! Water! Just one drop on the tongue! These rats, cowards, murderers! Why didn't the police come? Were there no police in the town? Why did nobody protect us? What crime did I com-

mit? Why am I here? What do they want of me? I hope Father knows where I am. He must do something for me. I didn't come home for lunch; he will surely look for me. Is it lunchtime already? It must be. . . . It must be three or four o'clock, or even later. I hope Father is already looking for me! . . . This leathery air is horrible! My tongue tastes of dried blood! The rats! . . .

He had fallen into their hands because he had been in a hurry to announce his news. After all, it was worthwhile, a thing like that doesn't happen every day! He was no longer jobless! No longer jobless. . . . The next morning he could begin work! Please let me go, I have a job, I must be in the factory tomorrow morning, March 1, at seven. . . . These rats don't even let you urinate, they surely won't let me go to my work. . . . I must get used to it. It will be twenty-four hours before I get out; by that time someone else will have my job! Better forget about it. . . . If only that breathing beside him would stop! Who is that man on his right? If only he could move a little! Who was standing beside him? . . . They had led him through the entire town. They had halted at every street corner, pointing at him, shouting: "Look! The curse of all Germany! The Jew is responsible for your misery! Down with the Reichstag burners! Germany, awake!" And they had driven him here with blows and kicks. . . .

Night fell. The first night. An electric bulb on the ceiling. A simple modern light-bulb. But all day long they had been given no food or drink.

For a change, they now stood with their backs to the wall, their hands on the seams of their trousers. In the meantime they had to shout in chorus: "Germany, awake!" and "Death to the Jews!" For a whole hour. If you didn't open your mouth fast enough, you were punched in the face. In the end the Nazis were tired and satisfied; they sat down. The prisoners remained standing.

When the command to turn around was given, Herman cast a glance at his fellow-prisoners. One quick glance. A fraction

of a second. But he saw nothing. They had taken his glasses away.

Six Nazis entered the room. They inspected the prisoners. Each separately. With a silent, contemptuous smile, they stared into each swollen blood-stained face. When they came close to Herman, he recognized Zunk, the high school teacher. And behind Zunk he recognized Kupke! Kupke, from 21 Castle Street. And Kupke gave a start—so he had recognized him, too! But he didn't say a word to Herman. . . .

And now Zunk stood in front of the prisoners. Never in his life had he acknowledged that someone else might have an opinion of his own. Once he had been a gymnastics teacher, and when he gave the command "Turn right," it was carried out without contradiction. Now he stood coolly facing the defenceless prisoners, and you could see in his eyes that murder was sooner to be expected of him than the slightest show of indulgence. In one hand he held a horse-whip; his other hand toyed with the catch of his revolver holster. He now enjoyed a power he had never dreamed of. And he was accustomed to the sight of people standing at attention. The bullied and terrified prisoners felt that they were entirely in his power, and he knew it. The situation visibly pleased him. He'd hammer the new spirit into their heads! If anyone knew how to handle people standing at attention, he was the man. It was his profession to break the spirit of opposition, to roar, to threaten punishment and to give punishment, until the boys were made to obey him. Here he was in his element. He was accustomed to explain in a harsh, commanding tone:

"Just wait, you good-for-nothings! I'll teach you how to stand at attention!"

With these words he used to begin a gymnastics lesson. And here it began the same way.

But here it was much, much worse. This was no gymnastics lesson.

"Why are you here?" the first prisoner was asked.

"Because I am a Jew!"

The horse-whip struck immediately.

"And you?" the second one was asked.

"Because I am a Democrat."

The horse-whip.

The third one was an old man, Professor Urban of the *Real-gymnasium*.

"Herr Zunk," he said, trembling, "we are colleagues. There must be some misunderstanding. I was arrested during class. Please explain this to these gentlemen."

"I am not your colleague!" Zunk yelled. "I am the Chief of Police! Stand at attention when I talk to you!"

"Why are you here?" the next one was asked.

"Because I am a Republican!"

Zunk's voice snapped with rage. "You are here because you are pigs! Get it?"

Then the questioning began all over again.

"Now, why are you here?"

"Because I am a pig."

"Very good," Zunk nodded with satisfaction. "At last you understand. And you?" he asked the second prisoner.

"Because I am a pig."

"And you?"

"Herr Zunk . . ."

The horse-whip again slashed through the air! The old man let out a yell.

"Why are you here?" Zunk asked him eagerly.

"Because I am a pig," said Professor Urban, weeping.

"I don't believe it," Fishman said. He turned white and he pushed down his glasses. "I don't believe it. What did he do to them? Your landlady mistook him for somebody else. She couldn't have seen him."

"Did he come home for lunch?" Herr Feivel said bitterly. He had come here braving all dangers. He had cautiously prepared Yossel Fishman for the blow. And the result? He refused to believe him!

"I ate alone and went back to my store right away. Sometimes he comes late, on days when he finds work."

"Go to the police," Herr Feivel advised him. "Do something! Tell them your son is missing!"

The timid little man. His step was not quite assured. The police officer ran over a long list and declared that he knew nothing of Herman Fishman. "I advise you to go home; probably your son is there."

Of course he wasn't at home. Yossel Fishman learned from his distracted wife that, one hour before, the Nazis had been in the house and arrested two of the tenants! "You won't believe whom they've taken!" she said, half hysterical. "They took Frau Liebig! And they got Herr Schaller." Both had been pushed into a truck that drove off at once. The whole thing had been very quick.

"Herman!" Yossel Fishman cried, and he ran back to the police. This time he was more sure of himself. His voice too.

"He is not at home," he said stubbornly.

"Have you a store?"

"Yes, I have a store."

"Then look there."

Nobody was in the store. Yossel Fishman stood in the middle of the street and watched desperately for his son, who did not come.

But Herr Feivel came back. He dragged dejected Herr Fishman into his shop, and locked the door.

"Read this," he said, handing him a newspaper. An article was pencil-marked; the title was: "When Have I the Right to Arrest a Person?"

"I haven't the patience for reading," said Yossel Fishman, but he read, none the less, that anyone was permitted to arrest a Jew

who had offended German national feelings in any way. It made no difference whether this act was a crime or a misdemeanour. The soul of the German nation was awake and would know how to punish those who committed an offence against it. German national feelings could be considered as injured, even if the Jew was aware of no crime but after reflection was forced to admit that his previous behaviour had been improper and distasteful to German racial comrades. Every racial comrade was empowered to arrest a Jew, and in case the Jew resisted, he had the right to use violence. If the Jew resisted arrest, his action was illegal. Every German could intervene ruthlessly and with clear conscience when he saw the honour of the German nation being injured. . . .

Exhausted, defeated, Yossel Fishman dropped the newspaper. "Are they really allowed to do all that?" he murmured. "Or is it only a joke? I refuse to believe it."

"Is this Kupke still living in your house?" Feivel inquired.

"Unfortunately."

"He arrested Goldstein, the shoe store owner."

"Why do you want to frighten me? How do you know all this?"

"The whole town knows it. You sit here in your store and you don't even know that your son has been arrested!"

"The police told me my son hadn't been arrested!" Herr Fishman insisted.

"The police don't arrest anybody!" Feivel cried angrily. "It's the Nazis who do the arresting! The police just look on or look away! Young Herr Levy, who lives with his mother on Market Square, was dragged out of a streetcar! And Löb, the dentist, they broke into his office while he was working and took him away in a truck. He was still wearing his white coat!"

"Please come with me to the police! Tell the police all that," Herr Fishman begged him. "Do me that favour!"

"I certainly will not!" Herr Feivel exclaimed. "Are you crazy?"

Yossel Fishman ran to the police for the third time. All the corridors were crowded. Everywhere stood terrified women, many

of them crying. He had to wait and wait. Frau Schaller approached him. She carried her baby in her arms. The baby was asleep.

"You have a pretty baby. . . . Heaven shield us from harm," Herr Fishman said. Then he sighed. "I am looking for my son."

"My husband was arrested," Frau Schaller said loudly.

"I have great fears for my son Herman."

"And where is Jacob?"

"In Berlin," said Fishman. "He wrote to me."

"You should be glad," said Frau Schaller. She looked around and then she whispered: "They have turned an empty factory into a prison. All the men they've arrested are probably there."

"Next two!" somebody called.

Frau Kohn, the wife of the Jewish plumber, entered the office with Fishman.

"There was something to fix on our roof. Today my husband went up!" she stormed even before closing the office door behind her. "He was hardly up, when Meissner arrived. He used to work for my husband; they had a row. Recently Meissner opened his own shop."

"Come to the point!" the police magistrate said.

"This Meissner had on a Nazi uniform and he wore the armband of a police deputy. When he heard my husband was busy on the roof, he climbed up and I heard him shout: 'You won't compete with me any more, you Jewish pig! It wasn't for nothing that the Reichstag burned down yesterday. Come down!'"

"You heard all that?" inquired the magistrate, perplexed.

"I followed Meissner when he went up on the roof. I stood near the attic window. My husband refused to follow Meissner. Meissner showed him his armband and pulled out his revolver, saying: 'You're under arrest; come down or I'll shoot!' . . . So then my husband followed him. And in the street a truck was waiting, and my husband had to jump into it, and then the truck rolled away!" And she added in a rage: "I am not a Jewess, I want my rights! I want my husband back; he never did any harm to anybody!"

"If you want to avoid trouble," the magistrate said with a mechanical smile, "then I advise you to keep quiet about your husband's arrest. It's for your own good. And I can't give you any information about your husband's present whereabouts."

He turned away from her, toward Yossel Fishman. "What are you doing here again! This is the third time today!"

"God will bless you if you only tell me where my son is," Yossel Fishman begged. "He's not home and he's not in the store."

"We can't give you any information about your son's present whereabouts. Next two, please."

Yossel Fishman hoped he would learn something toward evening. But he learned nothing. Haskel and Dvora Weiss stayed with the Fishmans until midnight, waiting for Herman. But he did not come. Yossel Fishman and Haskel Weiss got into an argument.

"We Jews can never expect justice from the police," Haskel declared. "And now less than ever! Did the police ever like us Jews? And now you go to the police and report that you have lost your son! Do you really think that the police would look for a lost Jew?"

"I told the police that he was probably arrested by the Nazis. I didn't tell them he was lost!" Yossel Fishman protested heatedly.

"So what? So the police got scared?" said Haskel maliciously. "Maybe the police are going to shoot it out with the Nazis on account of Herman? My dear fellow, one Jew more or less, what difference does that make to the police? Especially when it's the son of an Eastern Jew! I can tell you that with us immigrant Jews the police have nothing but trouble. When we arrive, our papers aren't in order, and our names aren't right. I gave my name as Haskel, and they said it was Chaskel. And then our dates on the birth certificates go by the Russian calendar, and they have a German calendar. Nothing is in order with us! And when they deport one of us, he doesn't go. Where should he go? Whatever happens,

we give the police nothing but trouble, and they don't like us."

Yossel Fishman was beside himself. "It's easy for you to talk! But what can I do to help my son?"

"In Russia, under the Tsar," Haskel Weiss said, "you could do wonders with money."

"Not here!"

"Here, too," Haskel said thoughtfully. "It's true that they say here they won't be bribed. But that only means they want lots of money."

"But I'm a poor man," Yossel Fishman lamented. "Even if I knew who could release my son, I couldn't get the money!"

"In Russia, under the Tsar," Haskell Weiss said, "they always used to set fire to a church before a pogrom, so as to give the peasants a reason for massacring Jews. Here they set fire to the Reichstag. . . ."

That night Yossel Fishman slept badly. He listened constantly, hoping that the door would open. But the door didn't open. His wife comforted him as well as she could. She had a few shrewd ideas. For instance, she wanted to go to the prison early in the morning, not to the police, but directly to the prison.

"Haskel is not entirely wrong," she said. "Policemen are always anti-Semitic. But it may be different in prisons. Maybe they're not anti-Semitic there. I'll go down to the hall and see if one of the prisoners is Herman."

She had once read in a book that prisoners were kept sitting around a table in a huge dark hall, making paper bags. And she had a vision of Herman, in prisoner's garb, making paper bags in the company of thieves and murderers. This vision so terrified her that she sobbed loudly and buried her face in the pillow.

But Yossel didn't think much of a visit to the prison.

"Why not?" she asked him, weeping.

"I don't know why," he admitted frankly. "But I have a feeling that it wouldn't help much."

She didn't have to go to the prison. Help came to Fishman whence he had least expected it.

Kupke had never forgotten the day when he had been accosted by the Jew Yossel Fishman in front of his store. He not only hated the Jews, he also feared them and believed firmly in their foreign powers and secret forces. This belief had been injected into him in constantly increasing doses, and he was really convinced that the dark destinies of the innocent world were directed by the devilish Semites. He thought of himself as a representative of the innocent world, and every Jew was for him a representative of these dark forces. Yes, he had laughed when this Fishman had threatened him with his Jewish God, but whenever he recalled that day he didn't feel quite comfortable. The simple truth is that he was afraid, even though he never mentioned it to anyone, not even Anna.

He said to her now: "Tonight, after dark, when nobody can see you, run down and see the Jew Fishman; tell him that I've seen his son and that I'm doing something for him. He'll probably be sent home tomorrow. But tell him right away not to dare threaten me again with his Jewish God!"

"What is all this about the Jewish God?" Anna was curious.

"Don't ask questions! Just do what you're told!" Kupke said sternly.

Frau Fishman wept with joy.

Yossel Fishman protested. "Never in my whole life did I threaten your fiancé!" He didn't remember every word of his conversation with the couple. "Your fiancé is a fine type of man," he stammered gratefully. "I am so glad to know that he has taken my Herman under his protection."

Anna was flattered. "My fiancé is now very powerful," she said, nodding. "And as a matter of fact," she added mysteriously, "I shouldn't tell you anything; if he finds out, he'll knock me dead. But if you promise not to let on, I'll tell you something."

"We promise," Yossel Fishman and his wife assured her, holding their breath.

"Do you know who ordered Frau Liebig's arrest?"

The Fishmans didn't know.

"My fiancé! He had her arrested as a Communist! Robert Liebig is a policeman, but he can't do a thing to help her!" She laughed with malicious joy. "My fiancé is much more powerful than any policeman! We may have Liebig fired, but we're still thinking it over. His wife once annoyed my fiancé by writing an anonymous letter to the Brown House, and now she's paying for it! Of course, she was never a Communist. But she'll be finished by the time she can prove it."

Suddenly she realized that she had said a little too much. She was seized with a mad rage against her two Jewish listeners.

"If you ever repeat a word of this," she threatened, "I'll denounce you as Communists and Reichstag burners. My fiancé will have you arrested at once, if you say a word! And you'll be treated no better than that other Jew last night!"

But she categorically refused to tell them what had happened last night and to what Jew.

This is what had happened the previous night:

First Frau Goldstein woke up. It was five o'clock in the morning. She awakened her husband. In front of the house a car had stopped. A searchlight shone on their windows. The house door opened with a groan. They heard a sinister whispering. Then silence. Then a hard, brief knock.

Goldstein jumped out of bed. "Who's there?" he cried, in terror. "Police! Open up!"

He opened. They were Nazis!

Frau Goldstein, trembling, clung to her husband.

"Don't try anything," one of them said. "Put on your coat over your pyjamas. Come on!"

"May I say good-bye to my children?" Goldstein inquired. His attempt to appear calm was unsuccessful.

"Oh, what for? In an hour you'll be back!" blustered a youth of about nineteen. "Come on, hurry up! We have no time!"

"What do you want of my husband? He hasn't done anything!" Frau Goldstein lamented, trying to hold her husband back.

The boy pushed her back into the bedroom. "He's just going to take a little ride," he scoffed, with a wink at the others.

Downstairs, Goldstein was forced to climb into the truck. He lost his slippers; they threw them in after him. In the truck there were two unknown civilians. The truck rolled off. Soon he'd be at the police station and hear what they wanted of him, he thought despondently. He felt cold. He timidly counted the Nazis who surrounded him. Suddenly he noticed that they were outside of the town. The highway was going uphill; they were approaching the woods.

"Where are you taking me?" he asked in alarm.

He was given no answer.

Then the car stopped.

"Get out!"

Goldstein and the two others were brutally pushed down.

The black trees stood out sharply against the early dawn.

Two men jumped down from the driver's seat.

One of them approached Goldstein.

"Do you remember me?"

Goldstein's knees softened. He recognized Kupke, though the former assistant mail-carrier wore a military coat and a helmet.

"Hurry up," said the driver harshly.

A prisoner near Goldstein whispered: "My name is Winkler. I'm a turner. I once kicked Kupke out of the factory for drinking. Who are you?"

Goldstein couldn't answer.

They were driven one by one across the road, into the woods.

A youthful murderer tramped behind the trembling Goldstein.

The ground was slippery. A short while before he was still in his bed. "I have a wife, I have children," he pleaded.

Twice he lost his slippers.

When he lost them for a third time and bent down to pick them up, the shots rang out.

The outward aspect of the town was unchanged. The bakeries and dairies were open as usual. The grocers and butchers opened their stores as they always had. Only in front of the house where the Living Corpse resided was something unusual going on. Young fellows in new brown shirts and brown storm caps, with formidable revolver holsters hanging from their leather belts, were dragging the old editor into the street.

They had an easy time of it. Yelling and howling, they led him to a cart which—anyone could see—ordinarily served for carrying manure to the fields.

"Climb up!"

When he was on top, one of the fellows placed himself behind him and, amid the boisterous laughter of the audience, cut his beautiful white hair. Another Nazi untied his necktie, unbuttoned his collar. Koch squatted like a ghost in a corner of the wagon. His coat was open. A watch chain dangled ridiculously from his waistcoat. He looked like a bald bushy-browed old convict, who had been allowed to retain his civilian clothes. His Adam's apple protruded, sharp and tremulous. And yet his grotesque face expressed impotent defiance and silent contempt for this unleashed pack.

At the shafts stood two figures that had once been men. With an effort they held themselves upright. One of them was the Crown Prince, the other was Alfred Richter. They already had behind them a night in the Gestapo prison. They too had been deprived of their collars, and their hair had been cut.

A photographer made his appearance. The Nazis noisily surrounded the cart. Everybody wanted to be in the picture. One of

them put his hand on the old man's shoulder, with a triumphant smile. Another one grinned and held his rubber truncheon over the bare scalp. The old man did not move. He was unmindful of what was going on around him.

"Smile, please!" the photographer cried.

Then the parade started out. The wheels squeaked at each turn. The Nazis advertised their show by shouting like the barker of a booth at a country fair. One of them rang a large bell. Housewives, startled into attention, saw an old man standing in the cart. They pressed their milk-cans tight, stared with open eyes, and fled, speechless, into the nearest doorway.

A few old hags couldn't conceal their enthusiasm, and shouted their approval: "Heiltla! Heiltla!"

A few men on their way to work stared dumbfounded at the cart, then they quickly looked away, toward a wall, a roof, a chimney, the sky, their own shoes, at any rate somewhere else. They let their pipes go out.

Herr Liebig Calls on a Jew

THE following afternoon the door of Fishman's shop opened. He rushed out of his office. But it was not Herman! A strange man stood before him. The man seemed familiar, he had seen his moustache somewhere—and suddenly he recognized him! It was Liebig, the policeman! But the policeman wore civilian clothes, he had no uniform!

"I am surprised," said Herr Fishman. "You have never been to my store. And I have never seen you in everyday clothes, with an ordinary hat and an ordinary coat. To what do I owe this honour?"

"I've been dismissed, Fishman!" Liebig said bitterly.

"So you're no longer with the police?"

"My wife was arrested!"

"I know. So was my son Herman."

"And do you know who is at the bottom of all this?" Without waiting for an answer he continued vociferously: "I'll kill the bastard! I'll shoot him like a dog!"

"My God! Don't bring any further trouble upon me! Speak softly!" Fishman implored him. "Come into my office!"

Liebig didn't even wait till he was seated. The words rushed from his mouth in a frenzied torrent.

"Just imagine! I was called in to see the new Chief of Police. I went into his office and who do you think was there? Kupke! Our Kupke! Smoking a cigar with the new chief! I stood at attention. The Chief of Police shouted at me that I was married to a Communist, that my wife was a degenerate, that I should be ashamed of myself and so forth. . . . So I told him my wife was no Communist, just an unhappy woman. . . . And then I saw Kupke grinning. So I said: 'This gentleman knows my wife very well, Herr Polizeipräsident; he knows her as well as I do, he knows she has no political connexions.' Then this Kupke came toward me, blowing his cigar smoke straight into my face and shouting at me: 'If you don't stop your impudent talk we'll arrest you, too! Give me your gun! And your card! You're dismissed! . . .' I thought I'd have heart failure. . . ."

"Why do you come to me, of all people, with your story?" Yossel Fishman was indignant. "How can I help you? Up till now you never talked much to me. You greeted me, you said 'Hello,' and sometimes 'How are you?' And now you come to me with this dangerous story! Why? What for?" He raised his hands in a defensive, imploring gesture, shaking his head with despair. "Why did you come to me?"

"After all, you know my wife." Liebig cleared his throat in confusion.

"I don't admit that I know her. It can only hurt her to have a Jewish acquaintance. And it can only hurt me to be acquainted.

with her. You'd better go to Frau Wunder or Frau Schade. Or even better: go and see Herr Stiefel."

Liebig sat helplessly on the sofa. He gripped his hat as though it were a police cap; he even groped for the chin strap and, unable to find it, he drew a handkerchief out of his pocket and wiped the sweat from his forehead.

"Everybody in the house has stopped speaking to me since yesterday," he confessed gloomily. "They're all scared to be seen in my company. But what have you got to lose? After all, I can talk to you without danger. You are a Jew, and the Jews are in trouble too. You won't betray me."

"But I don't want to know anything!" Fishman protested stubbornly. "First you tell us your worries or your secrets. And then you're afraid because you've told us, and you abuse and threaten us."

Somewhat stupidly Liebig chewed his cold cigarette. His cheeks glowed red in his whitish face. "You don't look well," Fishman said, pityingly. Liebig sniffled, wiped his eyes with his handkerchief, dropped his head.

"I knew all about it, the whole business," he groaned deeply. "The rest of you in the house thought that I didn't see anything; you thought Louise was fooling me. But she couldn't possibly be unfaithful to me. After the war she suffered agonies, but she stayed with me just the same. In the station nobody could understand why I was so eager for night duty. . . ." He broke off, coughed loudly, spat into his handkerchief, coughed again. "It's the war, Fishman, nothing but the war. For fifteen years Louise lived with a cripple and never complained. But last year it was too much for her. I knew it right away. I always expected it to happen. After all, I was a sick man and she was a healthy woman. I had no right to say anything. But when I found out whom she was carrying on with, it was a shock. But I swallowed that, too. I pretended I was dumb. I pretended not to notice. I even befriended this convict, to make it easier for her. And even after they began to break up, I

still did everything to bring him back to our apartment. I hoped they would make up again. But it was useless. I hadn't foreseen that a kid like Anna would take up with him. When Louise found out about it, it finished her. She is not a bad woman, Fishman. But she couldn't forget that bum. She tried to win him back again. She began to wear her skirts above the knees, like a schoolgirl, and low-cut blouses. I was sorry for her; she had lost all sense of decency. It was really my fault, after all. . . . She cut her hair short, but it was all no use; she was still an old woman. And one day she saw it herself. Then she began to go to church every day. I followed her regularly without her noticing me. She knelt down at the altar, praying and weeping. . . . And now he has her arrested! And he dismisses me! This jailbird dismissing me, a policeman! He sits there with his friend the Chief of Police and smokes fat cigars with him, and he has the right to dismiss me!" He stared wildly into a corner, avoiding Fishman's eyes. "I'll kill him!" he cried. "I'll shoot him! And then I'll shoot myself!"

"You're to be pitied," Yossel Fishman lamented. "But please don't plunge me into disaster! I'm a businessman! I haven't understood a single word of what you told me now! I'm afraid to understand, my dear Herr Liebig! Do you understand?"

Protective Custody

AT the cross-examination they asked him: "What is your name?"

"Herman Fishman," he whispered.

He saw the table. Four men stood around him. He saw straps and cudgels and blood-stains and barred windows and thick walls and pails of water.

"What are your connexions?" they asked.

"None," he said softly.

"Lying won't help you here!" they threatened.

"I am unmarried. I am not engaged, either."

"Don't pretend to be dumb!" they barked, seizing him.

He was dizzy; he lay on the table with his legs stretched out. His thoughts were confused, his will was gone, he wanted to tell them everything he knew, but he did not know what he should say. He cried desperately: "Forgive me!" and: "I don't understand you!" He could no longer control his senses; he suddenly remembered that he had once been connected with Max Kahn; they seemed to have something else in mind, but this was the only connexion he could think of.

"What we want to know is your political connexions," they said, breathing heavily. "Come on, give us names and addresses!"

They questioned him about people with whom he had never talked, whose names he had never heard.

He wept and sobbed, but could tell them nothing.

"You Jews are Reds, all of you!"

"Not I!"

"Your father is a Red!"

"No!"

"Then your sister is!"

"I have no sister!"

"You're lying! You've got a sister!"

"No! No!"

"What is your occupation?"

"Sales clerk!"

"By whom are you employed?"

"I am unemployed."

"That'll do for today! Next!" said the man who directed the cross-examination.

They unstrapped him, and he fell off the table. A few kicks brought him to his feet again. Then he was thrown back into the common cell.

He made an effort to stand up. The pain was excruciating. He

stumbled through the overcrowded room. In one corner stood the Living Corpse, with Alfred Richter and the Crown Prince beside him. The three were surrounded by a whispering group of their party members. In another corner Communists were whispering. Among them Herman recognized Franz Schaller. But he didn't dare approach him.

Near a barred window through which filtered the leaden-grey dusk, Heinz Levy was pleading with Benno Nadel, his former classmate.

"For God's sake, pull yourself together. Your howling is a disgrace to us Jews!"

"I know." The hunchback shrank convulsively. He slipped away from the window. He ran like a twisted shadow along the wall, but a shadow with wide, sorrowful eyes. When he gently pressed the door handle, everyone stared toward him in hopeful expectation. But of course the door was locked.

He was exhausted. He leaned against the wall and breathed noisily through his long, pale nose. His lower lip hung down. As a child he had worked on this lip for two years. Every night before going to sleep he drew in the recalcitrant underlip resolutely and obstinately, and finally he had tamed it. But since he was here, it hung down again; there was nothing he could do to prevent it. Though he had no mirror, he knew perfectly well that it hung down. He felt it. Did he also feel that he was wearing the shirt in which he was to die? Did he sense that he would be sent to a concentration camp and tortured for the amusement of his jailers? Did he remember his school years when Zunk used to punch his crooked back? These punches had once been Zunk's particular pleasure—these punches that had sounded ridiculously hollow and provoked Benno's comical attempts to stand upright, causing his hump to emerge suddenly on his chest. Had he the foreknowledge that they would soon finish him off completely with this trick? He would fall on his knees, he would promise everything, he would weep and flatter everybody, he would be forced to kiss filthy boots

and ice-cold steel. And he would do everything they would ask, but nothing would help him. He was finished, doomed. He would never leave alive the camp to which they were soon to send him. . . . Did he already sense it?

Alone, on a sack filled with straw, lay the Democrat Urban. The old professor looked like a dying tramp. His beard was matted, his suit had not a smooth spot on it, his shirt was filthy, they had taken away his collar and tie. His glasses, too. He could see nothing. He stared foolishly into space.

He was lecturing to an invisible class. His voice was like an overtaut violin string. "Gentlemen, will you please take note of the following observation: until now the pelicans in the zoo have lived in close community with the ducks. But recently a strange pelican arrived who was accustomed to eating ducks and who persisted in this habit in his new home. Now all the native pelicans wanted duck meat, too. Men are no better than pelicans. They are only too glad to be converted to cannibalism. The bell has rung. The lesson is over. Close your notebooks. You may go."

Herman sat down beside him. "I have a theory too, Herr Professor," he said, and added in a dejected voice: "My name is Fishman, Herman Fishman. You were my brother Jacob's German teacher." As he spoke, his eyes rested on Benno Nadel, who, with his hump, his drawn-in head, and his prominent ears, looked like some grotesque animal. "It is fate, Herr Professor, it is fate that has done all this. I was walking down the street, suspecting nothing, and you were teaching your class. And yet they arrested us. We would probably have been arrested even if we had been on the planet Mars. Or anywhere else, Herr Professor. There is nothing to be done about it. You can't go against fate." He waited longingly for the professor's reply, but Urban said nothing.

"Of course, this is only my private opinion; I studied at a business school," Herman stammered. He felt as if he had given a wrong answer in an examination.

"Did they ask you, too, about your political connexions?" Herman gulped.

"It's no use trying," the professor finally said. His voice was surprisingly firm. "You won't get anything out of me. The whole world is full of injustice—it cries out for expiation and retribution. The older the world grows, the more injustices it commits toward us, its people. No room is left for love, for God, for anything at all. I will never be able to have faith in anything. Leave me alone, you execrable Nazi! I won't argue with fanatics. I have nothing to confess. Get thee behind me, Satan!"

Then he was silent, staring with his almost blind, glowing eyes into the emptiness.

Herman moved fearfully away from him.

And here stood old Albert Koch, after a laborious life during which he had seriously thought that he could influence state and world politics by studying workers' problems and interests. He had been convinced that he had discovered an easy, simple philosophy, sufficient to appraise the entire political situation and also sufficient to affect and change it. And now this political life had been fundamentally changed, but not by him. However, it now turned out that the Living Corpse had not become so completely stultified as his critics had always maintained. The new and critical situation in which he found himself did not completely defeat him. It was moving to see him stand up, go from one to another, shaking hands; in spite of his recent experiences he had recaptured his old high-sounding eloquence, and with it he demonstrated how rigidly he was still attached to his old principles, "in spite of everything."

He belonged to the party which had had the decisive voice in the launching of the now shipwrecked Republic. He knew the Weimar constitution by heart. "I am thoroughly familiar with our legislation," he said, encouraging himself and others. "I know it

backward and forward. I intend," he confidentially informed his friends, "to start legal proceedings. This is a clear case of arbitrary sequestration—obviously non-constitutional. I shall immediately begin the fight for the restoration of law and order!" His voice vibrated heroically. "I will fight!"

"Fight? How?" the Crown Prince asked ironically. Like Koch, he was unable to throw off his old skin. Once again he was happy in his role of the younger colleague who sees his elder making mistake after mistake. He completely forgot that he was not in his editorial office, but in a prison cell.

"I will appeal to the courts! And if necessary I will go to the Supreme Court!"

The Crown Prince shook with silent laughter. Today, with his intrigues, he had finally succeeded, thanks to the general despair, in organizing a considerable opposition to the Living Corpse. What he had never achieved while free, he achieved now, in the prison cell! Everybody, including the chairman of the committee, Alfred Richter, deserted the old man. The Crown Prince had his great moment. The greatest in his political career! He did not yet realize that it had come too late. In spite of his physical pain, he felt joy, warm contentment. When at liberty again, he would take care to remind Alfred Richter and the others of this important moment. And then the Living Corpse would finally be buried. For a whole minute now they had doubted the old man's good sense, and that was sufficient. The old conditions would never be restored; one minute's doubt in this room counted for more than a whole lifetime of faith. . . . That much at least the Crown Prince had learned about human nature. . . .

Franz Schaller had not been beaten.

They had taken him down to the cellar and locked him up there. An hour later they came back, and sat silently around him while he remained standing.

"There are no more chairs," one of them said.

Then they looked at him for a long time. Schaller waited.

Sullen, hostile, he asked them after a while: "What do you want of me?"

"Your political opinions."

"You have my party book in front of you."

"So you're a Communist?"

"Yes."

"Sincerely?"

"Yes," he said simply. Not peevishly, as they had expected.

"Who is Rudy?" they asked insidiously. "What's his real name?"

"I don't know anybody named Rudy," he said.

"No use pretending." They smiled brutally. "On January 28 you had a unit meeting. He spoke at that meeting."

"So you know everything?"

"We know everything," they boasted.

"Spies?" he asked.

"Spies," they said.

"In that case you yourselves must know that I don't know Rudy. He came from Berlin, and I saw him only that once."

"He talked about the technique of civil war!"

"Your spies are no good," Schaller said contemptuously. "They are liars!"

"What did he talk about?"

"About the projected subway in Moscow."

"You know that's a lie! Two days before we took power?"

"Today it seems incredible to me too," Schaller said sadly. "But it is the truth. That was the subject of his lecture."

Suddenly somebody asked him: "Don't you want to join us?"

"No." He looked like a man who does not see any point in continuing the conversation.

"We need people like you," the questioner said stubbornly. "It is better for you to be with us than against us. You are a worker and we need workers. We are against the Jews and against the bureaucrats, but not against Germans like you."

Franz Schaller kept his impenetrable silence.

"You must know the old German proverb: 'If you won't be my brother, I'll knock your brains out.'"

Franz nodded.

"So?"

Franz shook his head.

"Think it over," said the other. "Take him upstairs."

Now he stood with Herman Fishman, advising him how to behave. He meant to help him.

"We live in the same house and we must stick together. You must always admit what they already know and what is of no importance," he said softly. "And if they ask you whether you are a Leftist, say calmly, yes."

"But I am not a Leftist," Herman defended himself. "After all, I can't admit something that isn't the truth."

"You're not Left? What are you, then?"

"Nothing at all." Herman held up his head proudly. "I had the good luck not to be interested in politics."

"You certainly were lucky, plenty lucky," Schaller nodded dreamily. "How's the weather out, Herr Fishman?"

But Herman was never to inform him about the weather.

A voice suddenly roared at the door:

"The Jew Fishman!"

Outside he found himself face to face with Kupke!

"You can go home," said Kupke. "But if you tell anybody what you have seen here, you'll be locked up again and you'll never get out!" He surveyed Y. Fishman's son. "You must have fallen downstairs, that's why your face is so blue and yellow and green. Right?"

Herman was silent. He continued to stand at attention.

"Sign here!"

Herman signed a document stating that he had voluntarily asked for protective custody, that he had been splendidly treated while

under arrest, and that he was leaving the Gestapo prison without having suffered any injury to his health.

"Shove off!"

Rosa Comes to Town

ROSA had been the Goldsteins' first maid; she had stayed with them for more than five years, then she had married and gone to live in the village of D—. It had been hard for the girl to leave the Goldstein family, particularly the children, whom she had known and cared for from the day of their birth. It was only natural that she should come to town from time to time to visit the Goldsteins and see "whether everything was all right with them, just like it used to be." On Easter she came for matzoths; she was "awfully fond" of them. Frau Goldstein gave her all her discarded clothes for herself and her children—Rosa had given birth to three of her own in the meantime—and the Goldsteins had also given her the high chair, and all the nursery furniture, including the play-pen and even a crib with all the bedding.

Rosa's looks hadn't changed since her marriage. She still had hairpins sticking out of her bun, and three front teeth missing. Neither had her attitude toward the Goldsteins changed a bit in all these years. She was just as bashful as before. When she came to Wilhelmstrasse, she was always treated to coffee, but each time the visitor refused to drink with her "masters." "No, I'll stay in the kitchen! I feel more at home there! No, no!" "But please come in, Rosa, don't make such a fuss, please!" "Oh, no, I really can't! No, it's not right!" It was always some time before she yielded to their insistence.

When a child was sick at the Goldsteins', or when anything else went wrong, they wrote a card to Rosa. The Goldsteins were con-

vinced that "there will never be another like Rosa." And now this pearl, Rosa, read in her village paper:

THREE MEN FOUND DEAD

Yesterday the bodies of three men were found by a road gang in a small pine forest off the highway leading to D—. Herr Zunk, the Chief of Police, at once visited the scene, accompanied by his assistants. One of these, party comrade Kupke, recognized one of the dead as the Jew Goldstein, owner of a shoe store on Wilhelmstrasse. The other two bodies were also identified. There were several bullet wounds in the bodies, probably not self-inflicted. The public prosecutor has undertaken to find the criminals. He will be assisted in his task by party comrade Kupke, of the secret police.

Rosa's husband was a petty clerk connected with a soft-coal mine. When he came home, she showed him the newspaper. Tears were running down her reddened face.

Her husband was a Nazi and he could guess what had happened to this Goldstein. "He was probably a Communist," he said, shrugging his shoulders. "They're arresting all the Communists now, on account of the Reichstag fire. This is a wonderful chance to get rid of them."

"I'd put my hand in the fire to prove that he wasn't a Communist!" Rosa cried. "You didn't know him, but I did; I knew him very well. He was always so good to us! And the Nazis killed a nice man like that! Yes, your Nazis did that! You're vile, all of you!"

It was clear that her husband suffered from a bad conscience. "Don't shout so loud, people will hear you! Can't you see that the murderers aren't known? You can rely on this Kupke of the secret police. He'll find the guilty parties. I think I've heard that name Kupke before; he must know his business, all right. And you'll see that maybe the Reds killed your Jew. Or maybe it's a lowdown provocation organized by the Jews themselves. It wouldn't surprise me at all."

She served the dinner, but she didn't eat a bite. "I can't swallow

anything. They shot him because he was a Jew. You're against the Jews, too, though you don't know a single one. But the shoes that poor Herr Goldstein gave me as your Christmas present, you've got them on right now!"

The husband had no desire to spoil his appetite. He ate well. Then he began calmly to explain his ideas about the Jews. "You see, I have no Jewish acquaintances, and I don't need any, either. I really have nothing against them, but this much is sure: that they all became ministers and wanted to rule the German people."

"But not poor Herr Goldstein!"

"But the Jew Brüning and the Jew Schleicher and whatever their names are. This is a serious business. The Americans may tolerate Jews like Wilsohn and Abraham Lincohn as Presidents, and the French their Jew Klemensohn, and the British their Jew Baldwin, but the German nation doesn't have to stand for that kind of thing. That must be made clear to the Jews, once and for all! As I said, I have no prejudice; they shouldn't be killed, but when you're told such things in our meetings, you can't help hating them. Let the Jews stay where the pepper grows or wherever they belong. Germany for the Germans, and Judca for the Jews! The Führer is quite right about that!"

"Where is Judca?" asked Rosa's eight-year-old daughter.

"I don't know, somewhere in Egypt or in Palestine, or somewhere around there, anyway; I never worried about that. In any case, it wasn't right of the Jews to try to force their rule on us."

Rosa said nothing. Again and again her thoughts returned to poor Frau Goldstein, and she resolved to go to town the next day. She had not been there for a long time, and many things had changed in the meantime, the villagers whispered.

In the village, too, they now had seven policemen instead of two. In addition, there were two secret policemen in civilian clothes, both village men. The young schoolmaster was arrested the very first day, for having "shot his mouth off" at the inn. "In the recent obituaries," he said, "everyone who has died has been mourned as

a victim of international Jewry and the reparation payments. No German dies from a natural disease these days; he has been destroyed by the Elders of Zion or the fourteen years of so-called democratic shame. And the crazy survivors conclude their notices with the moving request that the death of their beloved be avenged. So far as I can remember," the schoolmaster went on, with a smile, "we Germans have always had to avenge or save something: the nation, fatherland, home, world, universe, hell, heaven. . . ."

"You're under arrest!" said his skat partner, who until recently had been an accountant in the coal mine and now was one of the two secret agents. "Follow me!" And nobody ever learned where he had taken the imprudent young schoolmaster.

Rosa was dressed entirely in black. The shop in Wilhelmstrasse was closed. She hesitated. The house door was wide open, but she was afraid to go in; she was afraid to face what awaited her. She would be led into a dark room, surely the parlour; they probably had moved the large round table out into the hall, and there never had been much space in that hall, anyway. . . . She would stand before the bier, before the open coffin. She saw in advance the bloody corpse lying in a cloud of gauze. She had seen dead people in open biers before—an uncle, a neighbour in the village—but so far she had never seen a murdered man. And this murdered man was Herr Goldstein!

A tearful girl silently opened the door. They had a new maid. It was to be hoped she did her work properly. . . . The large round parlour table was not in the hall, so poor Herr Goldstein was not in the parlour. Maybe they had already taken him to the graveyard. Her eyelids hurt her; she blew her nose violently.

In the living room the widow was walking up and down. She didn't see her visitor; she saw only the irrevocable blow that had struck her. Her grief was boundless; she couldn't understand it, she would never understand it. That very morning she had been in a gloomy building, the morgue. Men walked between rows of

coffins, a few lids were raised, she saw the dead faces of strangers, her husband was not there, she stood motionless near strangers' coffins, somebody asked her whether she was a relative of the dead man she was seeking, he looked at a list, the person she sought had already been cremated, the ashes would be sent to her, this had been done at the request of the secret police, the next in line were called in, the poor woman left, she did not weep, she did not cry, it was cold, she didn't feel it, she passed through the town with a glassy stare, she spoke to herself, nobody heard her, she spoke to the dead.

"It's me, Rosa!" the old servant cried, embracing the widow who was only a shadow of Frau Goldstein. Today she was not bashful, she didn't think of going to the kitchen where she was more at home. She had come to comfort the widow, and now she was sitting there, good, kind Rosa. And she talked and talked.

"I had a fight with my husband," she said amid tears. "That's all nonsense, I know the Jews better than you do, I said. And poor Herr Goldstein, I knew him so well, I worked for him for five years, he was no Communist, I said. I'm sure he had nothing to do with the Reichstag fire. What a good man! He didn't even smoke!"

And so she talked on without interruption, giving advice to the widow. It was no use feeling that way, she said; after all, there were still the children, and she was still young, and maybe she would be able to begin a new life, and, ah, he was such a good master, she would never forget him, but that was life, you lived and then you died, and who could have foreseen it, but now they had talked about it enough, now she should hold her head high, though of course she had to wear mourning, it wouldn't be right if she didn't wear black for her beloved husband, he was such a good man. . . .

Rosa didn't have the heart to go home. She stayed overnight. She went to the kitchen and told the maid that she had been with the family for five years, and that she should try to keep this good position, but not to use the regular dish towel for the glasses, she would find glass towels in the right-hand drawer of the cupboard.

Three Jewish ladies came, and they too spent the night in the apartment. But Rosa knew perfectly well that they were nothing to Frau Goldstein, these ladies whom Rosa had never seen before. . . .

Little by little she learned that Frau Goldstein intended to send her children abroad to school, to Italy, and later, after the liquidation of her store, she would join them.

"Abroad? So far away?" Rosa declared reproachfully. "That's not the right thing for you to do."

Everything went much faster than Rosa imagined that evening. There was Kühne, the grocer. He was an old party member, he had really earned his reward, and now that so many Jewish stores were available, he could find something suitable for his son-in-law, Richard Lorke. He finally chose Goldstein's shoe store, offering the widow a sum he had decided on beforehand. The day following the transaction, there was a sign on the shop window: STRICTLY ARYAN FIRM.

It so happened that Goldstein's ashes were delivered the same day in a registered parcel. The girl gave the mailman a tip.

Uniforms, Uniforms, Uniforms

BERLIN.

It was drizzling. People climbed sullenly into the bus. At the street corners, men in uniform offered swastika badges, newspapers, pictures for sale. From many streets the sky was invisible for the swastika banners flying, hoisted everywhere from roofs, balconies, and windows. Four hundred brown deputy policemen marched menacingly across a square. Guns, holsters, cartridge belts, steel helmets with chin straps. Eight hundred hobnailed

shoes resounded on the wet pavements. Under umbrellas, hands flew high in the Nazi salute. The driver braked. The bus waited. All the buses waited.

Noise. Auto horns. Loudspeakers. Music. Military bands. Extra! Extra! The elevated train rattled by, drowning out the roar of the gigantic city with its clatter, then it disappeared high around the curve and the street noises were heard again. Extra! Black, white, and red flags hung from huge department stores. Airplanes flew under the grey clouds, dropping leaflets. Swastikas were painted on their wings. Swastikas everywhere. The traffic policemen wore armbands with swastikas.

When I reached Pankow, I passed the house several times. It was one of a long row of small one-family houses. There was no sign of life. The windows were closed, curtained. Just like the day before, or two days before; nothing had changed. I had been here every day, I had rung the bell, nobody had opened. Now I rang once more, waited.

A street cleaner came by, looked at me, and stopped.

"You're selling vacuum cleaners, aren't you?" he inquired.

"Nobody is home," I evaded the question.

"No, nobody is home," he said.

"They must be away on a vacation," I said.

"I saw you here yesterday," he said. "How's business?" He began to sweep the sidewalk.

"I don't sell vacuum cleaners."

"Radios?"

"No."

He looked at me inquiringly. "No use coming back here."

"What do you know?" I asked hesitatingly.

"Nothing. I am the street cleaner here," he said without interrupting his work. "Somebody was here as late as February 28."

"February 28?"

"After the Reichstag fire," he said softly.

"Thank you," I answered softly. "I understand."

"I didn't say a thing," he grumbled. "First the Reichstag was burned, then twenty thousand Berliners were jailed. If the place hadn't burned, they would have had no reason to arrest so many people. And there would still be someone living in this house. Good afternoon."

I went away without looking back.

Neither Rascher nor I had been successful in getting in touch with our Berlin friends. We had six addresses. But wherever we rang, the doors remained closed. The janitors gave evasive answers to our inquiries. "Out of town" or "I don't know" or "Leave your address" or "Why don't you send him a postcard?"

When we telephoned, there was no answer. The operator regularly explained: "No answer."

And when he persisted: "Operator, please try the number once again," we heard the same indifferent voice: "No answer."

I had to put an end to that! I had to pull myself together! There was no point to running around Berlin in this state of complete mental collapse! I had to get it through my head that only one thing counted now; to wit . . . Yes, what did count now? I didn't know.

What was I to do? I simply didn't know. I had no idea where to begin.

Every night I stayed in a different hotel, scarcely sleeping. Every day I met Rascher in a café at Potsdamer Platz. When the waiter walked by, we talked loudly about the weather. When he was busy at other tables, we put our heads together, whispering, hardly able to hear each other, so soft were our whispers. Did we fancy that we had to consult each other? We had nothing to consult about. We both hung in the air and we both knew it perfectly. But we didn't want to admit it to each other.

Finally I had to reach a decision! A decision—one way or another! But what decision? I was full of self-reproach because I did

not know. I walked the street—I noticed it with alarm—in long, nervous steps. I looked back much too often. I noticed myself that I had no assurance. I had to control myself! I stopped. A shop window. A price list. Chopped beef, RM 1.30. Bacon, RM 1.76. Pork fat, RM 0.94. I walked again. I thought confusedly: Just close your eyes, then open them again and you'll see that everything has been a dream. . . . It was no dream. I was in Prenzlauer Allee in Berlin.

People pushed me, jostled me; I moved forward very slowly. Annoyed, I crossed to the other side of the broad avenue. It was just as crowded. Everywhere swastikas. Everywhere brown and black uniforms. Armbands. Newsboys. A police car flashed by. Policemen. Chin straps. Guns on shoulders. Swastika flags. Another police car. Still another. And another. The passers-by stopped. One more. They stared silently after the packed cars. One more. The last one. The throng moved again. It was time to think of eating. I was not hungry. I bought a newspaper. I read on the first page: "The state's attorney at Magdeburg has ordered the release of Matthes, who had been arrested for shooting the Leftist Mayor Kasten in Stassfurt. At the same time the judicial proceedings against him were cancelled." I read the headlines: "Trade union local taken by assault. Action under fire. Five injured." "Mass raids. 389 arrests. Treasonable material confiscated." "Red agitation." "Wide measures foreseen against Jewish agitation." "Sensational search in Dresden." "Seventy-year-old lawyer shoots himself in Lichterfelde."

I stood in front of a movie theatre, bought a ticket at the window, and went in. I took a seat in the first row, near the emergency exit, over which a red lamp glowed. There was someone sitting beside me. I leaned back; it was dark—that was good, I enjoyed the darkness. I looked at the screen. I didn't care in the least what was shown. I was glad not to see any uniforms, any swastikas—and not to be seen myself. And I had no need to look behind me. Still, it

might be a good idea to have a look back. I turned around. There were ten persons in the audience. It was lunchtime. The man beside me seemed to be asleep. I looked carefully. Yes, he was asleep.

Gradually I grew calmer. My nerves were overwrought. That's what wore me out so. I noticed that my mouth was open. I coughed in embarrassment. . . . Of course, it was all over now. Once there had been a German Republic. And now there was nothing. The Republic was done for, dead. No one had resisted the Nazis. The terror raged. . . .

Only two days before January 30, I was sitting in an open meeting. The matter under discussion was: "Our work in the municipal council." Forty-eight hours before the collapse of the Weimar Republic, the Leftist municipal councillor Alfred Richter addressed the audience thus:

"In my capacity as chairman of the Burial Committee, I have under my supervision all the interments in this town. You can hardly imagine, comrades, all the details that have to pass through my hands," he declared proudly. "Nobody can be buried unless he has been reported to me as dead. Every death certificate must be countersigned by me, and bear my seal 'Approved'—only then can the burial take place. The dead of a whole town—that entails a great deal of work!"

Now I was in the movie theatre; I had hoped that in the darkness I would get some idea as to what to do. But the only thing that came to my mind was that last republican assembly on January 28.

"Before us, a bourgeois majority was at the helm," Richter had smiled scornfully. "We inherited from them an indescribably chaotic state of affairs. They were corrupt politicians! Their administration was nothing but patronage! I will quote only one instance: the tombstone department. This department was under the supervision of a certain Haase. And how do you think this Haase behaved? He constantly overstepped the bounds of his authority! He disregarded all the decisions of the municipal council!

When his malfeasance was brought to my attention, I called a special plenary session of the Burial Committee. I said: 'Gentlemen, Haase, *your* Herr Haase, has found soft berths for all his relatives in the tombstone department, dismissing all the old employees on the pretext that they were not needed! I demand, gentlemen, the reinstatement of all former employees and the dismissal of the entire Haase family'—that is what I said. What did the bourgeois members of the committee do? They protested! Then I asked: 'Does this mean, gentlemen, that you approve of Haase's actions?' At that the cowards walked out of the meeting!"

No, no, there was nothing to be done! I collected myself, I tried to follow the action of the film, I saw a car driving through a sleeping city, a drunkard at the steering wheel, a church tower, the clock, three o'clock, the moon, a crossing, the drunkard putting on the brakes, a disguised figure climbing into the car, the drunkard turning out to be quite sober. . . . The man beside me was snoring.

Richter's enthusiasm was evident. He outlined his plans in a triumphant voice. He intended to have the old cemetery wall torn down and a new one built. A light-coloured wall which would afford a peaceful, nay, an inviting sight to every citizen. The white headstones would tower above this beautiful wall. And the benches in the cemetery—he'd have them painted green. Between the graves he intended to plant colourful shrubs. Nor was he satisfied with the present lawns. He had in mind grass reaching to your waist, red-painted chairs for solitary visitors. And for all that, the rich were to pay! Of course, he knew that the rich weren't accustomed to give their money away for nothing. And so, to encourage them—he had the shrewd smile of a peasant—he projected a beautiful tree-enclosed area at the very rear of the cemetery. In that sheltered spot, at some distance from the ordinary graves, the city would rent family plots to the rich—expensive vaults for dead capitalists. "I can see that some in the audience have understood my sly designs," said the speaker, beaming with pleasure. "The prop-

ertied classes must be called on to make extraordinary contributions, according to their means. There is no good policy," he exclaimed, "without correct diplomacy! And what is correct diplomacy? Nothing could be simpler! If you want to catch fish, you must put worms on your hook. Otherwise they don't bite!" He sat down. After an intermission, he took the floor again. This time he'd be short, he reassured his listeners. "This coming January 30, 1933, will be a historic day for our town. At last our town will own a motor hearse. The carriage will have room, apart from the driver, for six pall-bearers. With the disappearance of the horse-driven hearse, the desire of many of our fellow-citizens for more dignified and more modern interments will be satisfied."

I could see distinctly—I almost felt I could touch them—the committee table and the speaker's platform. I could see these men who were exhibiting themselves, and had eyes for no one else, these men, with their ever-recurring phrases and impressive gestures, bent on attracting the attention of their fellow-members who were completely preoccupied with themselves. Everyone took himself most seriously, two days before January 30. . . .

The lights came on; the picture was over. The man beside me woke up with a start. He looked hastily to the right, to the left, he moved away from me, he stared straight ahead of him. I, too, stared straight ahead and pulled my hat down over my eyes; no need for him to see me! Then I slowly turned my head. How strangely the man beside me was behaving! He pulled his hat down over his eyes! It was impossible to see his face! But suddenly I saw his eyes. Under the brim of his hat they looked inquiringly into mine.

It was only one step to the emergency exit. In front of the theatre all was clear. I slipped into a doorway. I waited, my heart pounding. Nobody was following me. Who could follow me here in Berlin? Had I gone mad? I burst out laughing—my laugh sounded unfamiliar. I left my hiding place. I whistled a little. I interrupted my whistling to look at my watch. I must be quick now. I hurried to the nearest subway station.

I jumped into a car. The train moved off. I was out of breath. Hell, things couldn't go on like this! If I didn't pull myself together, I was lost, I was sunk, I was lost. . . . I'd begin a new life, decided. I had to try to save myself. Perhaps I couldn't save myself, but if I didn't try something, I'd be sure to perish. Today I meant to have a very serious talk with Rascher. We had to decide on some plan! I was twenty-six years old, I mustn't let the Nazis destroy my life. They had destroyed the Republic, but I could still direct the course of my own life, damn it! If that lousy Huster wanted to get me, he'd have to get up early! I wouldn't fall into his hands as easily as that!

The train roared. I was hanging onto a strap. Near me a brown arm was holding a strap, an armband with a swastika, a brown uniform. . . .

Again my thoughts returned irresistibly to Huster. I thought of vengeance, of plain, cold vengeance. I wanted to do away with Huster. I wanted to destroy him, to kill him with his own weapons. It was his fault that I was suffering here in Berlin. I pictured to myself in detail how he would fall into my hands, how I would take him by surprise, how I would, suddenly and without warning, announce to him: "My dear fellow, the game is up, the Third Reich has just collapsed, your Führer is under lock and key. Just say Heiltla again and I'll knock every tooth out of your head!" Huster would be terribly scared! Naturally he'd find some sort of explanation, he'd bring forth some tortuous excuse, he'd say he had never had any personal hostility toward me. "Oh, skip that!" I'd say. "Stop beating about the bush! I won't believe a single word you say; I know that you're a dirty dog! Nothing will help you now! You wanted to get me arrested? Now *you* will be arrested! The police are outside. You may go. They're waiting for you." I enjoyed this scene. I laughed quietly to myself. I imagined Huster's face. And Fräulein Nachtigall's. She'd throw a glance at Huster, then rush to the telephone. She wouldn't chirp: "Heiltla! Nachtigall speaking!" Instead she'd turn white and ask: "Is it authen-

tic?" And right beside her, there would be Patzig's lemon-yellow face. And the Molls. And Fräulein Erna would sigh: "Shall I call Herr Schön?" And Frau Moll, without being asked, would unlock the piano. No, that won't be necessary, I'll tell her. . . .

The train was tearing ahead. When it took a curve, the passengers leaned. Like tight-rope walkers they manœuvred their shoulders, their hips, to keep balance. Silently they mimicked every twist of the train. They didn't speak to one another. When they bumped into one another they didn't apologize, but cast mistrustful, oblique, elusive, inexpressive glances into space. They looked in no direction. They took good care not to attract attention to themselves. Only the uniformed man beside me looked defiantly into everybody's face, nose, collar. He was the only one against whom nobody bumped. He grinned. He was the only one to grin.

I was a poor wretch. What a ridiculous comedy I had just played to myself! At the moment, Huster had nothing to worry about. Above all, no illusions. I clenched my fists, my nails dug into my flesh. I bitterly reproached myself for always trying to escape reality. I gritted my teeth, holding tight to the strap to keep from falling. I was quite alone. Before, I had seen only one uniformed man in the car; now I saw ten, and even more. They sat, they stood, they surrounded me, they surrounded all the civilians. Sharply they scrutinized us. Despite their new uniforms they looked like criminals disguised as policemen. The light on the ceiling flickered. The walls of the car trembled. I was in a city occupied by enemy troops. Arrogant, scornful, inquisitive looks pierced me. The Nazi at my side thumped me. He said nothing. I said nothing. He examined me. I looked away. I drew a newspaper out of my pocket, I pretended to be absorbed in an interesting article. It really was interesting. "Every German can arrest a Jew," I read. "You're under arrest; follow me!" the German could say, and the Jew had to obey. . . .

At every station, the doors flew open. Silent people came in. Others went out, liberated. Through the windows I could see them

hurrying toward the stairs. Stairs leading up. Stairs leading down. I looked with envy through the windows at the stairs. I hadn't arrived yet. Again the train began moving. It whizzed, roared, tore ahead. . . .

Potsdamer Platz. Here was the café where Rascher was waiting for me. I went in through the revolving door. I looked around. He was sitting upstairs. I strolled slowly toward the staircase, across the room. All the tables were occupied. An orchestra was playing. Military music.

He was sitting with a glass of beer; his ashtray was full of cigarette stubs. I stood before him as he lighted a new cigarette. A piece of gold paper from the tip stuck to his lips.

"Well?" he asked.

"Nothing."

"I didn't meet anybody, either. Sit down and order a drink."

In front of Rascher there were already three saucers.

"You're drinking too much again," I said.

"When I drink I feel better."

It had begun when we realized that our stay in Berlin would not be a short one. He maintained that alcohol had a soothing effect on his nerves.

"Waiter!"

The waiter came. He knew me by this time.

"How do you do?" he said. "As usual?" he inquired.

"As usual," I said.

When he had left, I whispered to Rascher: "We must change our café. The waiter knows us too well. Maybe he is working for the police."

"It's all the same to me," Rascher said.

He looked dolefully downstairs. There was still a little beer in his glass. He swallowed it.

"Waiter, another one!"

I suddenly noticed that on the balcony where we were sitting there were no uniforms.

The waiter brought another glass.

"The weather is terrible," I said to Rascher.

He remained silent.

The waiter coughed.

Rascher emptied his fifth glass in one gulp. "I can't stand it any longer. I'm leaving Berlin today. I'm going back." He looked quite desperate; he had stopped being careful, spoke much too loud. "Are you coming with me? I can't stay here any longer!"

The waiter came back; he wiped the table.

"No, I don't like the weather a bit," I said to Rascher.

Rascher was silent.

The waiter raised my glass high in the air, slowly wiped a few scattered drops, assuming a provocatively indifferent expression. "On your right there are two secret agents," he whispered. "Political police. If you've got to go, pay now."

He put the glasses back on the table.

"Cheque, please!" I said.

The two men were zealously reading newspapers; the neck of one man was closely shaven, his ears bright red. When we passed by their table they gave a quick glance upward, then returned to their newspapers.

We walked in silence along Stresemannstrasse. Rascher smoked one cigarette after another. He took a few puffs of each one, then threw it away and again rummaged for his package.

The more agitated he was, the calmer I became. "No matter what happens, I am not going back," I said.

A blood-red poster attracted our eyes. It was a freshly posted bill; the paste was still wet. Many people streamed by. The poster, the size of two men, was affixed to a large wooden board.

We read:

"Men and women of Germany! Just as in 1914, an unbelievable campaign of atrocity stories has been unleashed abroad against you. The international Jewish press declares that we Germans are mistreating our Jews! We call upon you to organize resistance against

these unscrupulous liars and agitators! On April 1, 1933, the official anti-Jewish boycott will be inaugurated! We know that the German nation has a deep sense of justice and order, that in the depths of its heart it does not sympathize with violent measures! But our international prestige is at stake! Therefore it is announced:

"On Saturday, April 1, all National Socialist employees of Jewish-owned firms will call upon their employers at 10 o'clock sharp and demand payment in advance of two months' salary for all non-Jewish employees.

"Jews are forbidden to dismiss any non-Jewish employee. All members of the Jewish race must be DISMISSED WITHOUT NOTICE, regardless of their present religious affiliation.

"ALL THE DEMANDS of the Nationalist Socialist employees must be met by the Jewish employers. APPROPRIATE MEASURES will be taken against all Jews refusing to submit. Further decrees are in preparation.

"This spontaneous BOYCOTT DAY will begin throughout Germany at the same moment, at 10 o'clock sharp!"

We turned away, and continued our walk.

Rascher forgot to light a new cigarette.

Suddenly he stopped, gripping my arm.

"I won't go back," he said. "I will try to get to Prague. Will you come with me?"

Book 7

A LONG DAY OF TERROR

On the Eve

THERE was no longer any possible doubt, he was done for. Willy Linke had bagged him, this time for good. Had he defended himself only a year, or even four months ago, he would certainly have proved the stronger of the two. But now it was hopeless. Now Linke was the stronger, he wore the uniform, he was a pure Aryan, the rat.

At first Grünfeld had made fun of the frightened people in the streets. He saw that they didn't understand what was going on—and he did understand. He saw that they were stunned—and he was not stunned; hadn't he seen it coming? He saw that they raised their hand in the still unfamiliar salute, because they were told to, because they did everything they were told to—and he scoffed. They were used to obeying orders; all their lives they had been doing nothing else, in school, before the war, during the war, after the war, in the old times which had been so bad for them and in the later times that had been just as bad for them; after all, they were nothing but simple, stupid people. But he couldn't be ordered around, he was a free man, he was not to be intimidated—at least that was what he thought.

But he changed his ideas sooner than he had expected. Suddenly he was aware that he too had acquired the habit of whispering. Even on the telephone he had become cautious, after his partner had told him in a shrewd and perfidious tone that nowadays wires were tapped and letters opened. Then he heard of arrests, the murder of Goldstein, the atrocities committed in other towns, in Berlin, all over Germany. Linke spared him no detail, repeating in the same perfidious tone that "in one way or another" they would

"I am asking you in the most friendly manner to leave the firm."

"What indemnity do you offer me?"

"Not a pfennig. You've been making enough profit all these years."

"And if I refuse?"

"Just read this letter and you'll accept," Linke assured him. Grünfeld read the letter. His face turned grey and his smile vanished as he refolded it.

"You're not at all ashamed of yourself?" he asked. He really wanted to know.

Linke laughed. "If I had mentioned only the tax evasions, you might have got away too easy. But if I tell them that you are a dangerous Jewish Bolshevik, and that you have repeatedly said that the Middle Ages are not yet over in Germany and that most of the Germans you know are barbarians, it will cost me nothing but a little ink, whereas it will cost you your blood. Jewish atrocity stories are severely punished, my dear fellow!"

"You rat!"

"I have already emptied the safe," Linke informed him, and left the office.

Grünfeld looked into the safe—it was empty. The ledgers were gone too. Grünfeld tore open the window, banged it shut again, seized the letter scale, hurled it into a corner, picked it up again.

The telephone rang. It was Linke. "I am calling you from a café. If you promise to behave and leave voluntarily, I will employ you as bookkeeper. You have until tomorrow. Tomorrow is Boycott Day against you," he whispered sweetly and hung up.

Grünfeld tried in vain to light a cigar. . . . The matches were no good. He'd disarm Linke, he'd destroy him. He had made that crook into an honest businessman and now he reaped ingratitude! It is either he or I! Rather he! He'd blow him out—pfff!—like a match! . . .

At lunch his eyes were attracted by a newspaper advertisement.

A certain Frau Birkel stated that she had foretold the future and everything in it to many great men and women.

Grünfeld had never been to a fortune-teller; he didn't believe in that nonsense. But today the sweat on his forehead was stronger than his reason. He was irresistibly drawn to this Frau Birkel. Suddenly he found himself in front of a house, he verified the address from the advertisement, then rang the bell. In the waiting room there was a notice on the wall asking visitors to keep silent; only here could they obtain their horoscope, an analysis of their character, accurate information about their career and their marriage, all this from the scientifically tested clairvoyant.

"I would like to know what is in my stars," Grünfeld, usually so cool-headed, explained uneasily after he had been led into a darkened room and was sitting opposite a masked figure. He found out only after having put five marks on the table.

"It is written in your planets," the masked woman murmured darkly. "You are born for happiness, although at present it seems remote from you. On the trip that you are going to take you will learn things that will prove very useful to you. Within one year you will undertake something that will open your eyes. Only watch out for brunettes and gambling, because you won't have much luck with them. Up till now, luck has been unfavourable to you, but now you are approaching the Tropic of Cancer. Should you wish to try your luck in the lottery, favour numbers 9, 13, 39. In your youth you lived in your imagination; in recent years you have suffered hunger, but now everything is going to change."

When the voice stopped, Grünfeld stood up. "What you have said is strikingly accurate." He nodded. "I am perfectly satisfied. Thank you. I am also thankful to the stars. Good-bye."

He went to his bank, and had all his deposits transferred to his wife's account. Tomorrow he would go to see her, he would eat Polish carp and good home-made noodle soup. He would be irritated by her tearfulness and explain everything to her. No, he

would not tell her anything, he would not say good-bye to her, he would let her think that he'd be back in a week. He would never be back, he would never have to see her again and she would never have to see him. That was really not so bad. It was really the end; his mind was made up. Everything disgusted him. He shook himself.

His mother was dead—his mother, the only being on earth to whom he had been attached. If his mother had been alive, he wouldn't have dared to take this step, he would never have found the courage to write her a letter of farewell, he would never have dared to leave her alone—after all, he was her only son, her only support and friend. But she was no longer alive. He had nobody to consider. Everything was easy. What remained for him to do seemed to him much easier, unimaginably easier than all the things he had done hitherto in his life. He went to his apartment, took a bath, went to sleep. . . .

Since his release, Herman had not gone out into the street. He didn't want to, though he didn't say why. All day long he sat around in the apartment, without talking; he seemed to be constantly turning something over in his mind, but nobody ever learned what it was. Nobody learned who had inflicted the wounds on his face, on the back of his head, on his hands. He did not talk.

When he returned, he was overwhelmed by a deluge of anxious questions from his parents, from Haskel and Dvora Weiss: why and how and what had happened to him? And had the Nazis (don't mention them!) forced him to make paper bags like a plain murderer? What a disgrace! But his only answer was: "Leave me alone, I don't know." And at this "Leave me alone, I don't know," the matter rested. He did not tell them that he had found a job on the day of his misfortune and lost it right away, nor did he tell them through what hell he had gone, a hell without paper bags. He took no part in any other conversations, either; he fled to his room,

or sat by himself in a corner, indifferent to what went on around him, apathetic, idle, waiting for the newspaper that was brought to the apartment every evening.

As soon as the newspaper was in his hands, a terrifying change would come over him. The change was for the good, but still it was terrifying. His face suddenly betrayed interest in something, his eyes ran tensely over the printed lines, his lips regained some of their colour. But he still hid his hands.

He had never been an eager reader. The old Fishmans looked at their Herman with surprise; they couldn't understand all this. However, they asked no questions—they had slowly become accustomed to receiving no answers or only confused ones.

A few weeks before, this newspaper had still been democratic; now it was a Nazi sheet, but the Fishmans continued reading it because their subscription ran until June 30. Formerly Herman had been interested, at the most, in the "Sports Page," "Weather Forecast," "Entertainments, Balls, and Other Events of the Coming Week," in the serial novel, and the crossword puzzle. But now he was passionately absorbed in the front page, devoted to the political situation in the Reich! Then in the second page, devoted to local events. After that he would drop the paper, exhausted. That happened regularly every evening.

But on March 31, Yossel Fishman surprised his son in the act of studying a modern Hebrew grammar! Herman went on studying, without looking up. On this eve of April 1, Yossel Fishman was naturally made to feel, by the fearsome shadow of the impending events, that everything in the world had formerly been better than it was today; he was even convinced that his son Herman had formerly been a better boy than he was now, a good, trusting son with no secrets from his father. He was particularly unhappy when he thought of how enigmatic and strange Herman had become. He thought bitterly: I can't help feeling defeated this evening. In this town where I live, the Nazis are my enemies, there are many of them and I am only one. Besides, the Nazis are not human beings

at all—I am weak against them and I can't help that. But within my own four walls! What does my son want of me? Why does he torment me? Why does he make me unhappy? Aren't my troubles with the Nazis enough?

"Why have you stopped talking ever since you came back from that place?" He put all his fatherly displeasure into this question.

"Why should I always talk?" the son replied.

"You have changed a great deal since you were *there*," the father lamented.

"Why shouldn't I change?" the son said angrily.

"Is this a life that you are leading? All day long you sit in this room."

"Where else should I sit?"

"You refuse to understand me. All right. May I have the newspaper?"

"You may have it," the son replied.

"Tomorrow's Boycott Day."

"I know."

"Have you read this?" the father asked patiently. "The Jews were planning an attack, but our Führer was on his guard, and tomorrow they will have to pay for it."

"I have already paid enough," the son said dejectedly. But at once he cried: "Why do you ask me questions? Leave me in peace! Always these questions! Every day! All day long! I didn't say anything! You hear me? I did not say anything!"

But Yossel Fishman refused to give in. "You're studying Hebrew," he said. "Why? What is on your mind? I want to know!"

"I will have to tell you sooner or later, but I am afraid you won't like it," his son warned him. "Well, I want to leave this country. I want to emigrate."

"Where?" his frightened father cried, but the open textbook gave him the answer in advance.

"To Palestine. I want to be a farmer there."

"A farmer!" The father smiled in amazement. For a moment he

had almost taken seriously the project of going to Palestine, but now he was sure this was only a childish idea of Herman's. He sighed with relief. "You don't know what you want," he said.

"I know perfectly well what I want."

"A farmer! Why? In all your life you've never so much as touched a cow!"

"I will learn."

"All you know about the earth is that it makes your hands and clothes dirty."

His son was silent.

"You have probably read stories about farmers and you have probably seen farmers in pictures. But that's not enough preparation for such difficult work. And is that what you went to business school for?" Yossel Fishman spoke gently to his son. "Why do you want to go away? Aren't you comfortable here? I am your father! What is the matter with you? I have the right to know the truth!"

"I am afraid," his son said softly. "I can't stay here any longer. I've got to go. Believe me! I have a fear that you cannot understand, that nobody can understand. . . ."

"Ah, well!" Yossel Fishman said without assurance. "Let's both sleep on it. We'll talk about your plan tomorrow. Tomorrow is another day, after all."

Emanuel Stiefel and His Tenants Make Up Their Minds

THAT morning, like every other morning, Emanuel Stiefel made his daily round. After a fleeting glance at the rear section of the house, he thoroughly inspected the more imposing front section and the rabbit hutches. As he proudly handled the marvellously fat Belgian Giants and Japanese, he recalled the now remote great

time, when, for patriotic reasons, the breeding of these two species had been absolutely out of the question. He regretted that eighteen years ago the poor innocent rabbits had had to pay with their lives for bearing the names of enemy countries. "But what had to be, had to be," he sighed even now, after so many years.

The war against the unfortunate rabbits was in fact Stiefel's only war experience. Any others he might recount were taken from the newspapers. He was a dangerous man. Everything he read was quickly transformed into his own experience, into something that had happened to him personally. For example, that morning at breakfast he was completely convinced for a while that he had taken part in the World War as a private.

"Not you!" He couldn't fool his wife, she knew him too well. "Yesterday you were reading the life of the Führer," she said in a most insulting tone.

But Stiefel was not insulted. "When I take the butter knife in my hand," he dreamed, "it brings back to me vividly those days when the Jews so treacherously stabbed our brave German army in the back."

"That is straight out of today's newspaper," his wife said contemptuously.

"But I saw it with my own eyes," he still dreamed.

"All right, all right," his wife said, chewing.

"For that reason and because we lost the war on that account and because once again they are planning an attack against us today, the Jews will have to pay for all their crimes against the defenceless German people!"

"That's from today's paper, too," his wife said sharply.

Stiefel preferred to go on his daily round.

He stopped for a chat with old Bieber, who stared critically at the clouds. Stiefel was informed that it would not rain today, no, it did not look like it, it would be a beautiful April first.

"It's going to be a fine day," Bieber murmured contentedly.

"A very fine day."

"Well, the winter is over."

"It was a severe winter. And now we have spring."

"High time, don't you think?"

Nods of agreement. "And the sun is already quite warm."

"Still, it's cold in the evening."

"Well, spring has only begun."

"Still, it could be warmer in the evenings. I wouldn't mind at all."

"I wouldn't, either. But that's how it is."

They were in complete agreement about the weather. Also about the fact that it was high time. "I mean, the change in the government and all that." Also that the Jews were a band of conspirators; as a matter of fact they had never thought otherwise. "They should leave us Germans alone; they take away all our joy of living."

"Not only our joy of living!"

"They're really dangerous! And they're all millionaires in secret, rich and powerful capitalists!"

"I am no Jew," old Bieber said bitterly, "and so I am an idiot and poor as a church mouse. Is that fair?"

Stiefel nodded approvingly. No, that was not fair.

Both looked up at once toward the closed Jewish windows. They laughed contemptuously.

"Yes, yes," they said.

Emanuel Stiefel saw Anna opening a window in Kupke's apartment. He is pretty powerful now, this Kupke, Stiefel thought with a shiver. Everybody bowed to him, raising his arm and crying "Heiltal!" He was a somebody, a successful man, he had even seen the Führer personally, the rumour ran. He had been to Munich at a party gathering. Many things were in his hands now, perhaps everything in this town. . . . Nobody knew for sure just what Kupke's position in the Gestapo was, just what he could and couldn't do. At any rate it was safer to be on a friendly footing with him. At present he was one of the masters of the town. Even Xaver Wunder stood at attention before him. It was really a piece of luck

to have a man like Kupke living in your house. Kupke might some time be of assistance. . . . Of course Elli was for him body and soul. "Didn't I always say so, Father?" she exulted. "Isn't he splendid? And with all that, he is so human, so magnanimous." Stiefel's wife, too, was quite taken in. "He is not a bad man at all," she defended him—not that anybody ever said that he was.

Emanuel Stiefel was not quite so enthusiastic. His opinion was: Kupke is like a fox who has just broken into a rabbit farm and is making up his mind which rabbit to snatch. But he took care not to express his opinion about Kupke openly. Even in his own family he preferred to keep silent. Otherwise his own daughter might denounce him—no, Emanuel Stiefel wasn't as dumb as all that.

There were good reasons for his being less enthusiastic than his wife and daughter. This fox Kupke was after Stiefel's rabbits. Since January 30, he had appropriated eight splendid specimens. Stiefel dared not protest. But if things went on at that rate, his rabbit-breeding was done for.

"Have you seen my handsome German buck?" Emanuel Stiefel said, and, leaving old Bieber, he returned to his rabbit hutches. He dug his arms firmly into the straw, and seized a fat animal by its ears. He stroked its back, held its sniffing muzzle to his cheek, and said: "Well, little old fellow, how do you like it here?"

He had acquired this splendid specimen from Siegmund Edelmann. Two days before, the Rabbit-Breeding Association had expelled Edelmann, its only Jewish member. In utter despair, Herr Edelmann had come to see his fellow-breeder Stiefel and handed him the registered expulsion notice.

"In view of the recent events in Germany, we hereby invite all our non-Aryan members to send in their resignation to the main business office of the Association, before May 1. Membership dues must be paid up to December 1."

"I joined the Association twenty-three years ago," Edelmann said, in tears, real tears. "My fellow-breeders can't do this to me! During the war the Association even sent me a telegram to the field hospital

when I was wounded! Stiefel, you must do something for me!"

"You have a very handsome German buck," Stiefel hinted delicately. "I saw it at the last show. I like it tremendously."

"It got second prize." Herr Siegmund Edelmann somewhat stupidly contracted his sharply outlined red lips.

"I'd be very pleased to have that buck." Stiefel smiled shrewdly with his old womanish face. "Let's have a look at your letter." He seemed to be pondering the problem seriously.

"I'll offer you the buck as a gift. I'll send it to you!" Edelmann pleaded anxiously. "Please do something about it. After all, for twenty-three years . . ."

"As soon as I have an opportunity," Stiefel said without promising anything. He wouldn't even consider burning his fingers for a Jew. But now he had the German buck.

Before leaving, Kupke took one more look at his birdcage. The canary chirped, looking sideways at its owner; it was motionless, like a stuffed bird.

"Gilligilligilligilligi!" Kupke twittered. He quickly looked to see whether the water in the little bowl was fresh. Then he poured out some feed on the blue-enamelled floor of the cage.

"Have you got your revolver?" Anna inquired, clinging to him tenderly.

"I've got everything I need." He had also pocketed his blackjack.

"Tomorrow is Sunday," Anna said. "Today you'll be very busy and you'll eat out. But what shall I cook tomorrow? I never know what to serve you on Sundays."

"I want roast rabbit, just like every Sunday," said Kupke, reaching for his storm cap. "Stiefel has a German buck, a beautiful little thing! And fat! I'll break its neck tonight and bring it to you. Tomorrow I'll tell him I took it for our Sunday dinner."

Anna gave him a smacking kiss, which he graciously accepted. Once more, on the threshold, he twittered: "Gilligilligilligi!" Then, puffing out his chest, he ran downstairs, thought for a short while

of his Anna, his canary, his Sunday roast. But after he had left the rear part of the house and received old Bieber's salute and replied with a "Heiltla!" he pulled himself together and made himself think of the Jews. He'd show them something today! The German nation was awakened! He, Kupke, was awakened! Now it was over, once and for all, this Jewish exploitation! He turned red as he suddenly thought of Goldstein and his slippers. Ah, what the hell, the main thing was not to be a softy!

Arthur Schubert saw him marching across the yard.

"Heiltla!" he shouted from his window.

"Heiltla!" Kupke graciously replied.

Arthur Schubert said to his wife: "Did you see him? The Nazi movement, my dear Martha, that's real deomcracy for you! There's real opportunity! Every career open to a clever man. . . . Nobody ever asks what Kupke did before. He joined the party early, very early, that's why he is *somebody*! He is practically God Himself! And I mean it! He's got money too, all of a sudden! Money! He impresses me!"

"How do you know he has money?"

"It's obvious. And haven't you noticed the beautiful aroma that comes out of his windows on Sundays? Every week a roast!" Then he said in his high-pitched voice: "Today I have something serious to tell you. I must give you some rules for the future. Never again must you buy anything from a Jew!"

"Yes, Arthur."

"And never again must you greet a Jew!"

"Yes, Arthur."

As a young girl Martha had dreamed of a Lohengrin, and instead of Lohengrin Arthur had turned up, and had been a great disappointment to her. But she was a quiet soul, and had never so much as hinted at her disappointment. She liked pig's knuckles with sauerkraut. So did Arthur, and this common taste united them more than love, with which they had never become ac-

quainted. What remains to be said about Martha? Over the couple's bed there hung a polychrome of a sea battle, which she had dusted every day for twenty years. She was an obedient, almost obsequious wife. To be sure, in the five hundred instalments of the great serial novel *The Secret of the Beautiful Countess*, she had read that there was another type of woman, but she didn't belong to that depraved species. Her voice was in keeping with her small, almost delicate figure.

"Now listen, Martha!" Arthur said. "Only force ever succeeds!" He banged the table energetically. The weak woman had to agree with him. Yes, she admitted, she had been strongly impressed too; here at last was the right kind of politics, she said hesitantly—a really admirable kind of politics, the whole people could take part in it, not only the Reichstag deputies, oh, yes.

"The thing to do," Arthur cried enthusiastically, "the thing to do is to bang your fists on the table! And then you must pull out your gun and say: 'Now listen, everybody! You're going to obey me or else I'll shoot you dead, the whole lousy lot of you, get it?'"

Arthur himself had never in his life held a revolver. He had never dared to bang his fist on the table, except when he was with his wife, and he had never ventured to threaten or boss anybody. He had always been the one to be threatened and bossed. It was always the others who had their say. He had never been successful, he had never achieved anything. He had never used the right methods, that's why he had never achieved anything!

"You must be brutal and unscrupulous like the Führer—of course I mean it only in the good sense!" he explained enthusiastically. "That's a man for you. He knows exactly what he wants! Didn't I always say so?"

She was constrained to admit that he really had said so.

She modestly admitted that she didn't know much about the Führer.

"Of course he lives in Berlin now because he has to govern all day long. He is a great man," Arthur announced, getting up from

the breakfast table. "His parents were simple folk. His father was a customs official. That makes me particularly proud!"

"Oh, I understand," Martha lisped happily. "Your father was . . ."

". . . a customs official too," said Arthur, flattered that his wife too had noticed this rare coincidence. "Like the Führer's father, mine was a simple man of the people who protected the frontiers of our Reich. And so is the Führer the simple son of simple folk. Now he has all the power in his hands, and we share in it!"

"Has he a wife?"

"No." Arthur shook his head scornfully.

"Or children?"

"He has never married," Arthur said dreamily. Then he added with an air of mystery: "He is a solitary man."

"And does he go to church?"

"Don't be silly! Do you think he has time to go everywhere?"

"I would like to know," his wife said dreamily, "whether he plays dominoes when he is at home with his wife in the evening."

"Martha, but he isn't married! I just told you a minute ago! And he's never at home, either!" Arthur said reproachfully. "He's always at meetings or committees. Because, you see, he must do the ruling! You don't seem to realize what it means to rule, Martha!" He looked at his wife with disapproval. Then his features relaxed. "The Reds and the Jews say he has no soul. But I say that he has the greatest German soul in the world! Kupke, who was in Munich once, told me that he was even *gemütlich*, you know, a real *gemütlich* German!"

Martha stared, fascinated, at the little moustache which Arthur had recently grown.

"Martha, I regard him as a saviour! As a superman sent by God to us Germans! And now hurry up and get ready. Step on it! Don't be as slow as usual! We're going to town. Today we've got to crush the Jewish vermin!"

That same morning Paul Hummel suffered from a peculiar weariness. He was unable to grasp the situation, to think calmly, to plan anything; he was terribly unhappy. He said gloomily: "My cold is driving me crazy!"

Ah, a man who has a cold is unbearable, he thinks he is deathly sick, and his wife has to bear the brunt of it, his wife thought. She sat by him, took his hand in hers. "Never has anybody in our family been as sick as you are today," she said. "But it's not your cold."

"But I did everything I could," Paul Hummel insisted. "Every night we went out and tore down their posters, they followed us and shot at us from behind. But there's no more sense to it all. I give up."

For the past year Paul Hummel had been living at 21 Castle Street, in the rear part of the house. He was unemployed now.

He had always been an excellent fighter "for the proletarian cause." He had always had faith in that cause; he had tried to convert friends and strangers, had spoken in public in its behalf, had propagandized for it, had voted for it at elections, had paid dues—he had really done everything "an active class-conscious militant" can do. And on January 30 he had expected something to happen, he had expected to hear the call to battle—but nothing had happened, no call had been issued. The party's only advice had been to keep calm, to avoid provocation, to be in readiness. He had kept himself in readiness, but the cause for which he had fought so long was now lost. . . . There was nothing left of it in this little town. The party leaders were under arrest, and nothing was ever heard from Berlin.

During the war, while he was at school, his mother had applied for a scholarship for him so that he might continue his education. But her application had been rejected, although Paul had been an exceptional student. Later, his father had returned from the war and put an end to all these ambitious plans. He had refused to listen to any of these fantastic dreams, saying rudely: "I am not going to breed a class enemy in my family!"

His father, a tubercular textile worker, had once heard in Switzerland that only in a high altitude could his lingering disease be cured. He had been an affectionate, solicitous father. He not only refused to bring up his son as a class enemy; he also tried to make sure in advance that he would never have to work in dusty factory buildings. For that reason he had chosen for his son an occupation permitting him to work in fresh air and at high altitudes. Paul became a chimneysweep. Even so, he began to suffer spells of bad health. At the age of twenty, he was seldom well, and finally it became evident that he was afflicted with his father's disease. Apparently the air on the roofs of this town was not the high mountain air of which his father had once heard.

From this in many ways original father, who was long dead, Paul had inherited his feeble constitution. From his grandfather he had inherited his thirst for knowledge, for books, his interest in social problems. Paul's grandfather had fled to Switzerland in his youth, as a member of the Socialist Party banned by Bismarck. And his grandson now carried on his political passion.

At the moment, this chimneysweep with the great thirst for knowledge was without a job.

"Perhaps the situation will improve before long," his wife sighed. She looked at him anxiously, adding: "The Nazis have promised that it will, after all. Maybe you'll get some work."

Paul left his apartment in despair. So his wife, too, was on the verge of being taken in by this Nazi hoax! How alone he was! He stopped in front of a music shop. The latest publications were displayed in the window. *Brown Fatherland, Marching Songs*, he read. He had no desire to march. He had never had any desire to march. He often thought with a shudder of Zunk, his former gymnastics teacher, now a Nazi official. . . .

Paul was a member of the union, the party, the workers' choral society, a people's welfare club, and a cremation society. He had paid dues everywhere—recently, it is true, only the reduced dues paid by the unemployed—and now all these organizations were

powerless or entirely suppressed. His army was defeated—now it finally dawned upon him. But is it an event of cosmic importance when something dawns upon a little man like Paul? . . .

He came home for lunch. His wife carefully put the pot of lentils on the fire, then she cut the little piece of smoked pork into tiny cubes. There was no way of talking sense with Paul today. He was bitterly disappointed, he felt cheated, he had hoped until the last moment that the Left parties and trade unions would give the signal for resistance. He was fully prepared to go out and fight; only five minutes ago he had still been hoping for the call, he was still hoping, but nobody knocked at his door. . . . He felt like a stupid ox, he even said so. All his organizations were gone! How would he be able to live without the organizations that were a part of him? He couldn't imagine. Without politics? To perish in political action would have been better than to spend his idle days without politics. Everything was politics for him; how could it all change so suddenly? Inconceivable! When he saw a church he automatically thought: I am a freethinker. When he saw a saloon, he thought: I am a teetotaller. When he heard dance music, he thought: How can you dance while the proletariat is in chains? When he read about a burial, he knew: One day I will be cremated. . . . No matter what you mentioned, he was either *for* or *against*, for quite definite philosophical reasons. And was he to forget all that? Were all his opinions going to be prohibited? "Won't I be allowed to make my own decisions any more?"

"I'm sure they won't suppress the cremation society," his wife comforted him. "The treasurer was here to see you while you were out. He wanted your dues for April."

"He's in a hurry! Today is only the first!" Paul grumbled. He took his cap from the closet and went out again. He was full of sympathy for the poor Jews. He went out, firmly resolved to do something for the Jews. If only to annoy the Nazis! He wanted to see old Fishman's store, even to enter it, although the Nazis had

forbidden anyone to enter a Jewish store! He would go to see him and sit with him, just to keep him company on this day. Jacob Fishman had once been his classmate. Berta Schaller had told him the day before that Jacob and Rascher, the city librarian, were in Berlin. Were they still in Berlin? He hoped they had not been caught there. . . .

Let no one dare touch old Fishman; Paul wouldn't take it lightly; he'd come out and say: "Hey, what's all this! Hands off! I know Fishman! He lives in my house."

He'd keep an eye on him!

Grünfeld's Problem

GRÜNFELD slept until morning. Then he got up. He gave a hundred marks as a gift to his housekeeper, drank his coffee, and went to his office.

Linke was waiting for him.

"Well, have you thought it over?"

Just as every other morning, Grünfeld looked for the incoming mail. It was not on the desk. "I was too kind-hearted, too trusting. It serves me right. I let you have too much say in our business. I thought I had made an honest man of you, but you're still the same old cheat, the same old crook."

"You amaze me," said Linke, pretending to be stunned. He too spoke calmly, almost softly. "You forget what kept us together all these years, until now. You also forget what you owe me." His eyes were moist with emotion.

Grünfeld looked at him in surprise, he did not understand. But it made no difference to him now. "Leave me alone," he said. "You'll have my answer before noon."

Linke's eyes were dry again. He asked peevishly: "Can I count on that? Are you sure you'll make up your mind before noon? Your word of honour?"

"My word of honour." Grünfeld nodded.

Linke went out. Grünfeld sat at the immense desk, this time with no one opposite him. He didn't want to feel sorry for himself. It rather surprised him that he could be sad. He tried to convince himself that his death would be a very important affair. After all, he had lived only for that purpose, ha, ha. . . . It's a disgrace to laugh about your own death. He should be ashamed. He was. He succeeded, to his satisfaction, in being ashamed. He mechanically reached for a sheet of paper, drew little men on gallows, little men on gallows, little men on gallows. . . . He wrote the sentence: "Grünfeld has nothing to look forward to." Under it he wrote: "What is more, he has no more pleasure—in anything." Under the second sentence he drew a heavy line, as under a column of figures, and under the line he wrote: "Only possible answer: put an end to everything." He reread these words several times, was neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with them. He drew another little man on gallows, wrote under it in childish capitals: "LINKE." He put the sheet in his pocket.

He thought hard. There was one other way out that he might consider. Beginning today, he might stop shaving and then, as an old bearded Jew, wander from town to town, from country to country, from continent to continent. He could go begging everywhere and in different languages, in the Jewish communities all over the world, his hat on his head and his palm open before his growling belly. "Herr Rabbiner, I appeal to your Jewish heart, give me something, I haven't eaten for a week. . . ." But was it worth while, just to save his life, to become a poor old *schnorrrer* on the world's highways? Was life worth such wretched wanderings? No, this wouldn't do for him; he was a weary man, he did not like to travel. No, better end it now.

He wanted peace. He had earned it. Life was really a ridiculous

effort. In fact, to what end had he slaved so hard? When he had gone to see his mother in Kovno, soon after the war, the half-blind woman blessed him, praying that God might grant him a good end. All ends were equally good, whatever his mother might have meant; death was idyllic, and in the next world he'd be able to relax. . . . In paradise even sharks are unemployed. In paradise there is no plotting and scheming, no jungle of laws, no one is plunged into ruin. In paradise a man doesn't have to defend his skin; he has no skin, and his soul is beyond injury. . . . Of course, there is no after-life, you are irreparably dead, for ever, eternally. Amen. But how does one die?

He looked at the clock. Still a long way till noon. He still had time, time to die. Bah! Should he buy a strong sedative and swallow ten tablets? But would ten tablets be enough to finish him for ever? In the end somebody would save him, and Linke would bend over his hospital bed and say with a grin: "Well, my little rascal, are you feeling better? Don't worry, I promised you a job. Any time you want, you can sharpen pencils and empty waste baskets. . . ." No, tablets were not reliable.

A rope wasn't reliable, either. A rope often broke, or else somebody might arrive just in time—that is, too soon—and cut him down. And he would lie in the hospital and Linke would come to see him.

The river was out of the question. He was too good a swimmer. (He didn't trust himself a bit! Who knows whether in the last moment . . . ?)

It was a pity that he had no gas in his apartment; his house-keeper cooked on an electric stove. He could, it is true, go to his wife's apartment, send her away under some pretext, and turn on the gas there. But no, he didn't want to frighten his wife. Let the indolent old woman go on with her knitting in peace. He was leaving her enough money to buy wool for a long, long time.

The simplest thing of all was to plant a bullet in your head. But where to find a gun?

He got up wearily. Once again his eyes took in the room where he had worked so hard, where there had been so much happiness and so much irritation. He rang. When his secretary failed to appear, he remembered that today was the anti-Jewish Boycott Day and that all his employees were given a holiday to enjoy the spectacle. Ah, of course! This Boycott Day! He had completely forgotten to be upset about it, to be indignant against the Nazis! What for? So as to die realizing that he had one more cause for indignation? All this fuss! Bah! Herr Führer, we'll meet amid the worms! What a pity! He would have liked to say a few friendly words to the secretary; she was an efficient girl, she had pretty legs. In heaven or hell he wouldn't need any secretary. She wouldn't need him, either. Well, never mind, she wasn't there.

He took his car, drove it into a side street, meeting scarcely anyone. He stopped in front of a small gun shop. He got out, leaving his key in the car. He wouldn't need it any more. He went into the shop.

"Are you Jewish?" he asked the storekeeper.

"Of course not!" he protested. "My store is an old Aryan establishment!"

"But I am a Jew," Grünfeld reassured him. "Tell me, does this boycott work both ways? Can you sell a revolver to a Jew? I need a good gun, a handsome one, very expensive, very reliable. The most expensive is always the cheapest in the end, that has always been my principle. Why should I abandon my principle now? Have you something good to sell me?"

"To tell the truth, I am not allowed to sell firearms to anybody," the storekeeper said softly, locking the door. "But I am a businessman," he defended himself confidentially. "Whether you're a Jew or a Negro or a foreigner is all the same to me."

"To me too." Grünfeld nodded. He looked at several guns, finally decided on an expensive little revolver with a mother-of-pearl handle. It was the most expensive in the shop. He paid. He also bought a box of bullets. "I don't really need a whole box," he said

absent-mindedly, "but you probably don't sell that rubbish by the piece." He asked the beaming storekeeper to load the gun for him and show him how to release the safety catch.

He quickly grasped how it worked.

"Child's play." He shook his head nervously. "You keep on learning to the bitter end," this strange man said. He had seen many things, he had experienced and learned many things in his life. He had risked much and won much. He had set out with a suitcase and his brains, he had worked himself up by dint of daring ideas and untiring energy. But now he could go no higher. "You keep on learning to the bitter end," he said, like a man who had always known it and now found his prediction confirmed in every detail.

Again he made sure that the storekeeper had pocketed the money.

Then he said, more to himself than to the storekeeper: "My wife is expecting me today. But I won't go to see her again. In the end I might enjoy it too much, and then I would upset my plans just for the sake of having lunch with her next week. Do you understand me?"

"Frankly," the storekeeper said in surprise, "frankly, I do not understand what you mean."

"Never mind," Grünfeld comforted him. He cleared his throat in embarrassment, looking for a fine-sounding phrase of farewell. "And please forgive me for all the trouble I am causing you." But that did not satisfy him. He added reproachfully, scornfully, in a screeching voice: "Why have you chosen such an immoral business?"

Then he pulled the trigger. He was dead at once.

At that same moment, Willy Linke entered the Brown House. He had a very important declaration to make, he said.

He was received by District Leader Grosse.

"I have a Jewish partner, his name is Grünfeld," Linke reported,

sweating. "This Grünfeld has just confessed to me that he is a Bolshevik and that he plans to go to Berlin today, to shoot the Führer." He added, smiling apologetically: "And to think that I have been in partnership with this man for many years! I had not the slightest suspicion how dangerous this Jew was!"

"We'll take all the necessary measures immediately," the district leader said in agitation. "I thank you a thousand times. You are a loyal racial comrade, and I shall not fail to inform the proper authorities of your patriotic attitude."

Yossel Fishman Does Not Stay Home

WHEN he woke up that morning, Yossel Fishman said to his wife, as he said every Sabbath morning:

"Good *Shabbes*."

A little later he said: "*Shabbes* is *Shabbes*, and no one knows better than I what it means. But what today's *Shabbes* will bring us—this Boycott Day—I do not know. And how can I know?"

"And still you want to go to the *schul*," his wife said, wringing her hands. "At home in Sambor, for instance, I remember . . ."

"All right," said Yossel Fishman, "I can remember too. But you must not compare the Germans to our ignorant anti-Semites in Galicia! Did you ever see our illiterates writing in newspapers and on posters: 'Beginning 10 o'clock, Mister Jew, we shall spontaneously spit in your face, damn you; at 10 o'clock sharp we begin spontaneously and as one man to spit on you!'? . . . Was there ever anything as clever as that at home?"

"No, that's true," his wife admitted. "But I remember . . ."

"Yes, yes," said Yossel Fishman, "I can remember, too. But never before was any day so well organized. And you can count on the Germans, you know how well they can organize! So you

can be quite sure that this Boycott Day will be a masterpiece of organization! They won't forget a single detail! They are really very clever!" And Yossel Fishman laughed.

But his wife was not reassured. "Yossel, I don't want you to go," she said anxiously.

"But please be sensible!" Yossel said impatiently. "I must go, I must! We decided to go to our *schul* today, just like any other day and any other Sabbath. We decided to meet there and discuss the situation."

"And what are the German Jews going to do?" she wanted to know. "Are they going to meet in their synagogue?"

"The German Jews," Yossel Fishman said in a tone of firm conviction, although he had no idea what the German Jews were going to do, "the German Jews will meet too."

"And why don't you meet with the German Jews in their synagogue?" she inquired.

"Have you forgotten about the organ?"

"But on a tragic day like today," his wife said, "you could make an exception."

"Why don't they make an exception?" Yossel objected. "Why must they play the organ even on this *Shabbes*?"

"At least take Herman with you," she said.

"He'd better sleep, he doesn't feel well," Yossel resolutely rejected her suggestion; "and please don't worry, nothing will happen to me."

"God forbid," she said. "But only a week ago . . ."

"All right," he said. "I haven't forgotten."

That had indeed been an unforgettable day. That day, a week before Boycott Day, the former bowling alley had been stormed by the Nazis. Suddenly the men in uniform had rushed in upon the praying Jews, just at the moment when the so-called "silent prayer" was beginning, when no one is allowed to speak and when everyone must keep his face turned eastward without averting it for an instant. An ancient custom, strictly observed. A loud cough

is enough to fill even the stoutest heart with despair, with a mute despair—because one must not even clear one's throat before the end of the silent prayer. . . . The Nazis had broken in during that prayer. "Anyone that moves will be shot!" they yelled. And they gloated over the sight of the motionless Jews. They went from one to another, brandishing their rubber truncheons in the air. One of them struck with his blackjack the pulpit on which the *torah* was unrolled. "Hah!" they roared with laughter. "You learn quickly how to stand at attention, you Jews!" they laughed. "We've hardly begun teaching you, and you already know perfectly what it means to stand at attention! There's nothing like a good scare!" they laughed. One of the gang stood before the holy shrine and looked arrogantly over these Jews wrapped in their prayer shawls. He set his hands on his hips and condescendingly announced: "Well, you may move! Go ahead, move!"

"Well, go ahead!" A few seconds passed, and then the Jews began to move. In a peculiar way—the Nazis almost rolled on the floor with laughter to see it. The Jews stepped backward, three little hopping steps, and came forward again, then made a deep bow before the east wall and the holy shrine. "Ha-ha!" laughed the Nazi standing in front of the shrine. "Ha-ha! Now let's see your papers, your passports, and whatever else you've got in your pockets!"

The Jews quickly reached into their pockets and produced their passports. There were two Rumanian, two Lithuanian, two Polish, two Yugoslavian, two Czech, and two Hungarian passports, but there were also nine "stateless" passports, and six had only simple certificates, so-called Nansen passports.

"So you're all foreigners," the gang leader said, disappointed, and he didn't seem to know what to do next. Suddenly he had an idea. "Which one of you is related to Stalin?" he demanded.

Nobody replied. And probably nothing would have happened to anybody, if at that moment the mechanic Schmutzler hadn't entered the former bowling alley. He was well acquainted with

these Jews, he assured the Nazis. He had known them for many years, they were quite harmless. They came here to pray twice a day, every day; they had been coming here for the past twelve or thirteen years, quite harmless Jews. . . .

Poor Schmutzler!

"There are no harmless Jews!" the gang leader shouted in rage. He gave a sign to his subordinates, the Nazis turned away from the Jews, took the struggling, protesting mechanic between them, and immediately began to question him. They shouted into his face that he was a traitor to the German nation, a bomb-thrower and a bandit, they wanted him to confess at once. When Schmutzler assured them imploringly that he really had nothing to confess, four Nazis forced him to swallow a bottle of castor oil and then he confessed everything, everything, everything. He confessed to two Jewish grandmothers, one Marxist conspiracy against the state, one armed attempt against ten ministers of state—there was nothing he did not confess. His trousers were full. He writhed, groaning with pain. They stood around him, laughing, firing question after question at him, and he answered all of them: Yes, yes . . .

"Of course I haven't forgotten," said Yossel. "But I am going just the same. I gave my word that I'd be there. Everybody will be there."

Everybody was there. First they prayed. Yossel Fishman's seat was next to one-legged Haskel Weiss. Haskel was a very sentimental man; for him the Sabbath had always been a day of dreaming, of quiet, understanding smiles. And for Yossel Fishman the Sabbath was quite simply the day of rest, the day when instead of going to his store he took a walk. In the summer he walked on the shady side of the street, in the winter on the sunny side, his hands clasped behind his back, his hat pushed down on his neck, with the slow, measured step of a poor, bearded little man who feels like a king because he can afford to go for a walk.

On that Sabbath, however, Haskel Weiss could not smile under-

standingly, and it did not even occur to Yossel Fishman to venture a royal promenade on the sunny side of the street. This Sabbath was very different from any other Sabbath. All the Jews, including the two from 21 Castle Street, were profoundly perturbed. They were in danger. Beginning at 10 o'clock, things were scheduled to go badly for them. Innumerable and mighty enemies were threatening them. And God, they prayed, God alone could protect them.

On other Sabbaths, the prayer shawls were draped comfortably, festively over their Sabbath clothes. But today the prayer shawls hung around them protectively, as if curtaining them against assaults. Pale Yossel Fishman rocked back and forth. The black skull-cap on Haskel's red head moved up and down.

Nervous hands kept watch over the slipping prayer shawls, the sliding skull-caps, the fluttering pages of the old prayer books. Soft, sobbing voices were heard. It was a wordless humming, nothing like the rumbling, singing noise that usually filled the prayer hall.

They had resolved that after the service the shoemakers and tailors would return to their shops, the storekeepers to their stores and offices. . . . On other Saturdays the shops and stores of these pious Eastern Jews remained closed. But today they didn't want to hide from the Nazis. They didn't want to run away; besides, it was impossible. The whole town was one vast pillory for them. It was their fate to stay. They were tied to this town, they could not simply take a train to another town. Not only because a pious Jew does not travel on the Sabbath, but because in every other town Jews were standing at the pillory, just as they were here. It was their fate that they lived in this town; it was their fate to be Jews in Germany.

"Things are hard, very hard, you can believe me," Herr Feivel assured the others, who were silently folding their prayer shawls and stuffing them in their velvet bags, for the service was now over. "If only the German police had made me leave this country in 1920. Then I'd be in Paris now, or in Antwerp, or in New York,

but certainly not here." He vaguely remembered that at that time he had some grievance against the German Jews—they had been unable to understand his plight as an Eastern Jewish refugee, he asserted. "But now they too will understand what it means to be a persecuted Jew!"

"That stupid smirk of yours gets on my nerves!" Yossel Fishman cried.

"I wasn't smirking!" Feivel retorted. "Why do you defend the German Jews, anyway? He's defending our aristocrats! What did they tell me, these gentlemen, in 1920? In the East where you come from, they said, these things are natural, but here in our Germany this can't happen. . . . But even then I maintained that in every country there were criminals waiting for a gang leader. Well, was I right?" His joy at having been right was quite visible this time. "Over there his name was Petlura, and here his name is—well, you know what Aaron Hirsch's name is. . . . I told the German Jews everything that was going to happen!"

"Why don't you leave the German Jews in peace! They're having just as hard a time as we are!" Haskel Weiss protested.

"It's much easier for them; even now in this misfortune they are the aristocrats and we the *schmorrers*," Feivel insisted. "Haven't they got good German passports? Even today they can go abroad. Today, on April 1, 1933, I would like nothing better than to be a German Jew and have a German passport. I assure you I would cross the frontier today, immediately after the evening prayer, when the Sabbath is over. When I think of poor Goldstein! But I have no passport, I don't dare cross the frontier without a passport. I am a man without a country; that means I am caught like a mouse in a trap."

"I am caught like a mouse in a trap too! But it doesn't make me shout like you, Feivel!" cried Herr S. Klein.

They were not in a hurry to go into the street. "10 o'clock sharp" was still far away. Again and again somebody would come out

with a tale to tell. There was the *shochet*, S. Klein. After the incident in the slaughter-house a few months before, he had conceived the daring plan of leaving Germany and emigrating to peaceful South America. But he began to consider that idea seriously only after January 30. And one week before, after the attack on the *schul*, he had firmly decided not to remain in this dangerous land! But how to get to South America? By a boat, of course, that was no problem. But something else was a serious problem: he was stateless, he had no papers, and his wife and his daughter possessed no documents, either. So he had gone, three days ago, to the nearest big city. Here there was a Polish consulate. He went in, filled out a visitor's blank, and after a lot of red tape he was finally admitted to a small office.

"Good afternoon," he said. "Many years ago," he said, "I emigrated to Germany with Russian papers. These Russian papers were given to me in Warsaw; at that time Warsaw was part of the Russian Empire. The Tsar and the Tsarina and the Tsarevitch were still living in Russia—but I lived in Germany. And when the war—God shield us from another—broke out, the Germans here—you know what the Germans are—treated me as a Russian, as an enemy alien! Well, to be brief—what's the use of wasting so many words?—all of a sudden Warsaw became a Polish city. And that," he apologized, "made me nothing at all. Now I'm neither a Russian nor a Pole. And I need papers. What do you advise me to do?"

The Polish young lady to whom he had told the complicated story of his life in these simple words, this young lady was a distinguished beauty, what is called a national beauty, a proud national beauty. She knew it too. But she did not know exactly what this *Pan* S. Klein ought to do.

"Were you really born in Warsaw?" she inquired sceptically, just to make sure.

"And why, may I ask you, shouldn't I have been born in Warsaw?"

"So you were born in the Polish city of Warsaw?"

For some mysterious reason Herr Klein became angry. "No!" he exclaimed. "I just told you that at that time Warsaw was a Russian city!" He could scarcely have said anything more foolish. Had he confessed a murder to this Fräulein, the consequences would not have been more catastrophic. But "Warsaw a Russian city"! A real madman!

The beautiful young lady really couldn't stand for anything like that.

"Never," she said standing up graciously, "never was Warsaw a Russian city!"

"I swear that in my time Warsaw was . . ."

"Then why don't you go to the Russian consul?" she inquired with a charming smile, and she pointed to the door, on which a colourful poster invited you to "VISIT WARSAW." "The Russian consul will be able to take care of you!"

"Many thanks for your excellent advice," said *Pan* S. Klein, bowing politely.

Of course, the Russian consul was not in, and neither was the vice-consul, the second, the third, or the fourth vice-consul. But there, too, he was taken to a small office and received by a broadly smiling snub-nosed Russian girl.

"I am from Warsaw," he said, and so forth.

"I am from Moscow," the young lady replied, smiling. "And it is quite possible that before the October Revolution your birthplace was Russian. But Russian history previous to 1917 is now liquidated!"

"Oil!" Herr S. Klein shook his beautifully bearded face in despair. "That is really a pity! And how about my wife? Her name is Hannah Klein and she was born Kipnis. Born Kipnis, from Bendery in Russia."

"Today," the Russian girl smiled, "that town is in Rumania. . . ."

Herr Klein recounted all this in a leisurely fashion, with many details. Everybody listened with interest, and no one made any move to leave the *schul*.

"Did you go to see the Rumanian consul too?" asked Herr Chaim Blumenstein, who also came from Bendery.

"No. What was the use? I had learned enough. I went to a good Jewish restaurant and ordered some stuffed *kishke*; it was not bad at all, I recommend that restaurant to all of you," said *shochet* S. Klein, smacking his lips. "And that was the end of my trip to the city," he concluded his report. "I will never get any papers and so I'm stuck here. We Jews have outlived all our enemies—Herr Pharaoh, Herr Haman, Herr Nebuchadnezzar, and Herr Titus; all our enemies are dead—but we, we are alive! And we shall outlive him too!"

"Still, I'd prefer to outlive him in another country," said Feivel. "How easy travelling used to be! Even a trip as long as from Riga to Vladivostok could be made on one ticket, travelling all the time in one country and with the same kind of money! Today nothing like that is possible! Aside from a valid passport, you need a hundred different visas. A visa for Lithuania and a visa for Latvia and one for Finland and one for Poland and one for I don't know what country. And then you must provide yourself with all kinds of money: Lithuanian lits and Latvian lats and Finnish pennis and Polish zlotys and Communist chervontsi. And in the end all that doesn't help you, because all of a sudden a new country has sprung up on the road from Riga to Vladivostok!"

"I have never heard of anybody going from Riga to Vladivostok," Haskel Weiss said in surprise. "I know many people from Riga, and I would surely have heard about it if anybody had ever made that trip!"

"Before the war, plenty of people made that trip," insisted Feivel. "Why not? Why build a railway if no one travels on it? Besides, it doesn't make any difference whether it was that trip or another."

"And I don't understand," Herr N. Wolf declared, "why any-

one should have to travel through Lithuania and Finland, if he goes from Riga to Vladivostok."

"Who says that he has to?" Herr Feivel shrugged his shoulders. "But if you want, you certainly can go to Vladivostok by way of Finland."

"It is almost ten o'clock," said Herr N. Wolf, clearing his throat. "Who's going out first?"

"I am," said Yossel Fishman, tracing a hesitant upward curve with his hands.

"As a matter of fact I wanted to go first," said Herr S. Klein. "But I will wait."

Yossel Fishman said a lingering farewell to Herr Weiss, then to Herr Blumenstein, then to Herr Klein, then to Herr Rappaport, then to Herr Wolf—he said a separate good-bye to everybody.

"Now I'm going to my store," he said.

"It's time to go to my store," he said.

"I think I'll be going to my store," he said, dawdling.

"Now we'll have to go one after another," he said.

And, turning to Herr S. Klein, he said with an uncertain chuckle:

"What's the matter with these Nazis? Are they crazy, fighting against me like this? Who am I, after all? Can you understand it? I would like to know what I ever did to them."

The repair shop was closed. Poor Schmutzler was still under arrest. Such a good *goy*! The streets were unusually crowded and bustling. Yossel Fishman twitched convulsively as two men approached him!

No, they were not accosting him! They were just passers-by, thank God! A heart attack could easily result from such a scare!

There was a gathering on the corner! Who knows? Maybe they were not discussing the Jews . . . maybe these men knew him, maybe they were talking about him, maybe they had something up their sleeve. . . .

He slunk past them; he would have liked to make himself invisible. He hoped they had not noticed him. They surely couldn't have seen him, otherwise something would have happened.

On the sidewalks all the people looked like murderers! Yossel Fishman's movements were like those of a hare trying to escape from the headlights of a car on the highway. He didn't succeed. He stumbled down from the sidewalk and ran along in the middle of the street. Everywhere were people whispering, probably talking about him, what else would they be talking about? This dangerous whispering terrified him: he was alone and the others were innumerable. . . . He thought that if he walked around them he wouldn't be seen, but in the wide street he was much more conspicuous every time he changed his course or hesitated. Poor, hurrying Yossel Fishman.

He was dressed like any other man in Germany. But in spite of his German clothes, the pale, anxious, bearded face of the Jew from Strody would be recognized. All my life I've been hunted, he thought, in a sweat. He suspected that all the anti-Semites of the town were staring at him, that they were ready to pounce on him. . . . All the billboards, all the leaflets lying around him screamed:

THE JEW IS THE CURSE OF GERMANY!

A cruel day. Even the sky was cruel, it was against the Jews. It was a beautiful day. Without rain. The posters flaunted their message, unhampered and arrogant. There was no escape. He had to collect himself, to pluck up his courage. Today Yossel Fishman stood alone, face to face with the Third Reich. And Yossel's face was covered with many small cold drops.

He approached his little store. In the window stood the dummy, he saw it from a distance. And then he saw two Nazis standing in front of his shop window, holding a yellow poster! His eyeglasses clouded over; he wiped them quickly. The shrill words of the poster leapt out at him like dogs. He was afraid of dogs; the peas-

ants around Strody used to set dogs on him when he came to sell them wire and nails and shovels. . . . Now he stood in front of the poster, while his trembling hands fumbled for the key to the store. He read: "ATTENTION! DANGER! World Jewry is out to destroy your country! German nation, resist! Don't buy from Jews! DEATH TO THE JEW!"

One of the two Nazis was Xaver Wunder.

Finally Herr Y. Fishman found himself in his Jewish store. He kept his overcoat on. He pushed back the curtain from the wooden shelf, mechanically counted his three winter coats, four suits, eight dresses. Then he went to the shop window but avoided looking out at the street. He removed the three sets of women's underwear. Then the sweater. Then the cotton socks. Then the single pair of men's shoes. Finally he took the sky-blue shirt of silk jersey off the stupidly staring dummy. The coloured paper on the floor and the walls was faded and full of light spots. Yossel Fishman didn't even forget to remove the sign saying: CLOSED ON SATURDAY. Or to take the undressed dummy out of the window.

Then he glanced at the mail box that was screwed to the door. A letter was in it. He took it out. The letter was from his son Jacob, from Berlin, Berlin was on the postmark. What was he doing in Berlin? He had written him not to stay there. All the most powerful Nazis were there; it must be worse there than here. Jacob's stubbornness would lead him to disaster, would bring grief to his father. Berlin was no place for a young man like Jacob. A young man like him should go somewhere else, well, maybe to Frankfurt. But Berlin of all places! . . . It was Sabbath and Yossel Fishman couldn't tear open the envelope. For a while he toyed with the idea of opening the door and saying to Xaver Wunder: "You know me, we live in the same house and on the same floor, you know I'm a Jew, would you mind tearing the letter open for me, today is the Sabbath. . . ." But he preferred to wait until the first three stars betokened the end of the day of rest. He put the letter in his pocket.

The two Nazis continued their watch in front of the empty shop window. Never before had that shop window attracted so much attention as today. Passers-by whom Yossel Fishman had never before noticed in this little street stopped in front of it, raising their arms and saluting the pickets. Others pointed silently at the grey store sign, at the empty windows, and went on without saying anything. More people passed back and forth before Fishman's shop that day than at any other time during its existence. To celebrate that day, the banks, the city hall, the courts and schools were all closed. The whole town was to participate in the anti-Jewish campaign. "No false pity!" Xaver Wunder cried to the hesitant crowd.

For a moment Yossel Fishman looked, fascinated, at the throng in front of his store. Most of them were exultant youths, young toughs who had already learned to despise the helpless. They painted swastikas on the narrow shop window and distributed leaflets among the curious. .

What a contrast between the tremendous apparatus mobilized today by the Nazis and this tiny shop! What a contrast between this gaping, roaring, excited town and me! Yossel Fishman thought, deeply dejected, before retreating to his tiny office in the back of his store. . . .

He didn't see the man who edged his way through the crowd. This man was Paul Hummel. He made a bee-line for Fishman's store.

"Stop! Don't buy from a Jew!" Xaver Wunder cried.

"Well, I'll be damned! Another one from Stiefel's house!" Paul Hummel muttered darkly. "Let me through! I buy where I please!" It is true that he had not a pfennig in his pocket, but he didn't mind their thinking that he really wanted to buy.

"Keep out!" the other Nazi cried. "The Jews are our curse!"

"Out of my way!" Paul Hummel said, pushing the Nazi away from the door. But the Nazi caught him by the arm and quick as

lightning pressed a stamp on his forehead! Hummel didn't resist. He looked bewildered. The ink stuck to his skin. The people surrounded him now as though he were a billboard. One of them read aloud: "This traitor buys from Jews!" Uniformed men applauded. Somebody whispered in his ear that he should run away, that he should give up the idea of going into the store, and run to the other side of the street.

"No!" Paul Hummel said defiantly. "I will go where I please."

"Slave of the Jews!" they cried after him, full of hatred, when he opened the door.

Above the store there lived a couple. The husband was an accountant in the office of the local water company. In his underwear he weighed two hundred and twenty-eight pounds. Deep within this mass of flesh dwelt an indomitable desire for movement, excitement, adventure, danger. But he preferred to let others meet the dangers. He preferred to look on. This first of April was very favourable to such desires. He sat by the window and looked down, with interest, on the adventures of the Jews. It gave him enormous satisfaction to see the Jews in danger. It had sufficed for somebody to say: "Down with the Jews," and he was convinced and converted. He was an old Brown Shirt. He had joined the Nazis because he was fed up with his wife and his empty evenings; while the movies or the radio would offer no satisfactory entertainment to a man of his calibre. In the Nazi movement he had sought and found an escape from the meanness of his personal life. They were interesting fellows! Real hotheads! It was often a question of life and death! It was a pity that he could not join their storm detachments, he was too fat for them, too clumsy. Besides, Hinkel, the party doctor, had advised him not to, he had fatty degeneration of the heart and high blood pressure. Otherwise he was all right, he was a pure Aryan, he could at least be a passive member. His office manager had joined long ago. In these circumstances joining up could only be an advantage, he kept saying to his wife.

His wife was a harmless, insignificant girl. She had looked like a spinster even at the age of eleven, with a depressing, drooping line around her thin lips, with nickel-rimmed glasses on her blackhead-studded nose. She seldom talked, but had a lively imagination. Now she sat with her husband, looking down into the street. He wasn't the only one; she too had ideals, some of them harmless, and others of which she never spoke. For instance, she passionately loved radishes and dark beer for her supper. And her secret wish was to become some day a wealthy countess like the chief character in the serial novel in five hundred instalments, *The Secret of the Beautiful Countess*. But she was quite satisfied with what was now going on in this street where everything was usually so boring.

She had no children, but she did have a dog, named Fipsy. Their love for Fipsy was the bond that united the couple. "Come here, Fipsy, look down," she invited the dog. "Now the slave of the Jews is being branded!" Fipsy barked. Yossel Fishman started with fright: was he going to be more afraid of dogs than men, today of all days? "Above all, no pity!" the fat accountant cried to the crowd in front of the house. But now the crowd was thinning; the people wanted to see other adventures; after all it was a great day. Only the two pickets remained.

"On Saturdays my store is closed, Herr Hummel," Herr Y. Fishman greeted his visitor. "I don't sell anything on Saturdays."

"I don't want to buy," Paul Hummel said irritably. "Where is there a mirror?"

Yossel Fishman pointed to the little mirror in the corner. Paul Hummel began to wipe his forehead with a handkerchief. Fishman gazed at him and shook his head. "Do you have to come here today of all days?" he asked.

"The ink doesn't come off with water," Hummel said rudely. "I have you any benzine?"

"I don't keep benzine around. Too dangerous." He summoned up all his courage. "I just received a letter. I can't tear it open to-

day," he said, "because today is Saturday and I am an orthodox Jew. Would you mind opening it for me?"

Paul Hummel looked at him, speechless, but he took the letter, opened it, and laid it on the counter.

Yossel Fishman thanked him, and read his letter. "From my son," he explained. "From my Jacob, you used to be a classmate of his, you once told me so yourself. He is still in Berlin. I am opposed to it. But he doesn't ask my advice. He never did."

After a while he asked a surprising question:

"Tell me, Herr Hummel, are you a pious man too? I mean, of course, a pious Christian?"

"I am a non-believer," Hummel grumbled. He spat on his handkerchief and again wiped his forehead.

"That's quite all right," said Fishman. But he was visibly distressed that Hummel was not a pious man. "I'll tell you why I am asking you. I am a pious Jew myself, and for that reason I have always respected the authorities set over us by the Almighty. But just as you entered the store, I was asking myself whether I was right or not."

"Spit doesn't help at all," Hummel shook his head in annoyance. "Well, our authorities are now outside in the street. You can respect them if you like."

"The trouble is that there are also authorities set up by the Evil One," Yossel Fishman whispered.

"That's more like it," said the freethinker, nodding approvingly.

"Thank God there is an immanent justice," Yossel Fishman confided.

"I don't believe in that," said Hummel. "At any rate, what we are going through now is not justice."

"Who can tell what purpose is served by this day?" Yossel Fishman tried to convince his sceptical visitor. "Often we don't know why we suffer. But everything has a meaning. . . . Don't shake your head. You can believe me: our life is a trial ordained by God in His wisdom."

"If that's the way you see life," protested Hummel, "you're an eccentric. But I'll stay here, anyway. If anyone tries to hurt you, he'll have to deal with me. Now you know why I came here."

They sat in the small windowless room in the back of the store, shielded from the threatening town.

"For instance, today the Nazis made me an important personage," Yossel Fishman said, scratching his chin in perplexity. "Every living man knows today that there is a Fishman, and where his store is situated, and that he's having a bad time of it because he is a Jew. Today the whole world sees me and my enemies. And every sensible man can compare me with my enemies, and I don't have to be ashamed. Certainly not I! And some time another day will come, maybe not soon, but that day, for which I shall always be waiting, will certainly come. Maybe it will be another first of April. . . . I won't lose my faith. . . ." He smiled dreamily to himself.

Paul Hummel, who had been so disappointed in life, had a strange feeling. Talking with this Jew gave him new courage and hope. Of course this Fishman was right! There is always a tomorrow and a day after tomorrow!

"We must stick together, Fishman!" he said softly, pressingly. "So far as I am concerned, you may believe in your God. We ought to fight the Nazis together! We'd soon send them to hell!"

"I am much too weak," Yossel Fishman resolutely refused. "What can I fight? How can I fight? I am a small Eastern Jewish storekeeper, it's not my business to meddle in politics."

Paul Hummel had grown up with the slogan: "Oppressed, unite, for union makes you strong." He couldn't conceal his disapproval. "I don't understand you! Don't you want to help us improve conditions in Germany?"

"My dear Herr Hummel, I'm helping enough! Maybe later you'll understand that I am even helping a great deal toward making a better life here for honest and innocent people. I am helping by my sufferings. Isn't that enough?"

"No! That's all nonsense!"

They could not agree. And yet they remained together. At noon Yossel closed his store. The two Nazis were still picketing. Paul Hummel left the store in Fishman's company.

"Traitor to the nation!" snarled Xaver Wunder.

"I didn't hear you," Paul Hummel said dryly.

"Gentlemen! Please don't fight!" Yossel Fishman trembled.

"Come on!" Hummel hurried him along the streets. He walked with him to 21 Castle Street, and they separated in the entrance.

"You are a very fine man, a really good man," said Fishman. "I will write to my son about you."

"And you're certainly a funny duck," Paul Hummel laughed. "I never really knew you until today."

The Dangers of Philosophy

THE day before he had been dismissed by the hospital.

Now he stood at the window of his little apartment, 7 Market Place, watching the marching men. They were forming ranks in front of the city hall. Once again he saw the detested uniforms.

A month ago he had been lying in a cellar. After his cross-examination, he was unable to move from pain; he had lost consciousness. When he came to, he was lying in a bed in a white room. The nurses told him he had been the victim of an auto accident, that he had been found on the highway. He had listened to their story in silence. He had also remained silent when his mother had visited him in the hospital and tearfully implored him to talk so that the car that had run over him could be identified. But no one could induce him to talk about his accident. . . .

He heard his mother enter the room and come up to him, but he did not turn around. He would have liked to weep, but he

couldn't. He would have liked to be moved by the tears of his anguished mother, but now nothing was possible. Inside himself he felt a horrible icy weight, one icy lump of cold lead.

His mother stood close beside him. She implored him: "Come away from the window, Heinz, don't leave it open."

But he kept it open. A military band was playing. Across the square, on the balcony of the city hall, stood a group of men in uniform. He recognized some faces in the group. It made him shudder! In spite of the distance he felt the cold look in their eyes, the ferocity of their expression. He saw his former teacher Zunk raising his right hand in salute, and he heard his thundering voice.

The Nazis had transformed the German language into a language dripping with blood. For more than ten years their partisans had been promised "Jewish blood," "the total destruction of the traitors," "a bloody revenge for the last war," "a night of the long knife." And now they had achieved undisputed power and their impatient partisans were waiting for the promised "bloody settlement."

"Today we have made a beginning with the Jews!" cried Zunk. "The wealthy nations imagine they can preach their morality to us! Wealthy people living in beautiful houses can afford to be moral! But we are poor wretches, we Germans! We can't afford a luxury like morality!"

Every sentence was punctuated by frantic applause. Zunk was no longer a young man, and this day was a landmark in his career. He had been ambitious; now at last he was standing on the balcony of the city hall, he was Chief of Police, and the whole town was listening to his words!

Now Kühne, the stout grocer, came to the parapet.

"There are some people who still can't conceal their pity for the poor Jews, who even today have preferred to buy in Jewish stores, instead of our Aryan stores! These traitors," he cried, "are still unaware of the dangerous and pernicious influence of this race.

Their bleats against us are a confession that they have too much leisure—too much leisure! We cannot permit anybody to waste his time on futile games! Everyone's time belongs to the state! We will force every man to march! During the fourteen years of democratic shame many Germans forgot what it means to be a German! To be a German means always be ready to march! Many grew lazy! We know how to fight this laziness! We shall make you happy again, as you were happy in the good old times! And to those who don't want to join, we say right now: That's what our storm troop detachments are for! We shall put the whole nation in line, we shall co-ordinate everybody! And when we give the order, it must be obeyed! Everybody must obey, because Germany's greatness is at stake!"

Then District Leader Grosse came forward, in a black uniform, with many medals on his chest. The scar on his hard face glowed red. In a strident voice he shouted to the gathering below:

"We are all soldiers again! We are soldiers for the fatherland! If anyone thinks that injustice is being done to the Jews, tell him: Thinking is not a soldierly virtue! Those who think cannot act! Those who think have scruples! Only obedience frees men from all worries! Everybody must know: There is one man who thinks for all of us, and this man is our Führer! Private life has ceased to exist; there is no longer any such thing as good or bad conscience! Soldiers must march; that is their sole duty!"

After the enthusiastic crowd on the square had quieted down, Huster took the floor. "And this doesn't apply to the Jews alone!" he yelled, gesticulating wildly. "We'll change the whole German nation from top to bottom! We'll put an end to all the bourgeois humbug! We won't tolerate any five o'clock teas! The time is past when, in the guise of so-called entertainment, revolting outlandish Jewish-Negro music could be dinned into the ears of the German people! We know how to stop this yowling and clamour of modern instruments! No longer shall we tolerate the shaking of hands, or the removing of hats, no longer do we tolerate the

saying of 'good morning'—in Germany only our salute is permitted! And this salute is . . ."

"Heiltla! Heiltla! Heiltla!" There was an uproar in the square; it came sweeping up to the officials on the balcony, up to all the windows filled with listeners and decked with countless swastika flags, up to the city hall tower where floated an immense swastika banner, up to Heinz Levy, who softly closed the window and turned away from the spectacle.

"Please leave me alone," he begged.

He was a student of philosophy, preparing his doctor's dissertation. Many books and papers were spread out on his writing table, on top of them a work by Dürr entitled *Ethics*. He opened it at random, and his eyes accidentally fell on a marked passage which said that death was "the opposite of life, surely a very bearable condition."

It would be an exaggeration to say that this sentence was decisive. But it would be false to ascribe no significance to that accident. One thing is certain: Heinz Levy was unfortunately one of those people for whom the interval between the conception and execution of an idea is always short. . . .

He tore out the page, underscored the sentence with a red pencil, put the page on his table. On the wall hung his father's picture. He could scarcely remember him. He looked at that picture. A soldier in field-grey with a steel helmet, a strange narrow face with glasses and a moustache, legs encased in top-boots. His father was buried somewhere in Flanders. He, his son, would be buried here. Families are separated that way. . . .

The lords of the town were still standing on the balcony, reviewing their armed bands that paraded below them. These were no philosophers, no great minds, they were not hampered by knowledge of the world and themselves. Their thoughts were strictly limited. They were fanatics. But he was no fanatic. He was

finished. He had no strength left. They had broken him. They had dragged him to a corner, they had whipped him so hard that he couldn't hear his own screams. . . .

He was still young, but he gave up. The struggle was not worth while. Alone? With friends? He had none. They had done it. One man less. Only a short time ago he had thought death was none of his concern, it was something for old people to worry about, his generation had plenty of time. But now death stood dangerously near him, a young German Jew of twenty-three, and he did not want to escape it, and he could not escape it, there was no way. . . .

He sat down at the table, took a piece of paper and a pencil, and wrote: "Forgive me, Mother."

He found his diary, turned its pages, and read on the last one: "Was my father's blood of a different colour from that of your dead fathers? And the common grave in Flanders where my father is buried—has it a separate section for Jews? Did he die only for you and not for me? . . . Perhaps you are right—I am beginning to think myself that I don't fit in with you. . . ." He read about his plans and hopes, and smiled sadly. He had actually made plans for the future! He read: "In December 1933 I want to go south, perhaps to France or Italy. . . ." He had never seen the sea. Well, now he was sure he wouldn't see it. It was April 1, 1933.

Above him, on the fourth floor, someone was walking up and down in his room. He started with fright, he was lying in the cellar, he heard heavy steps on the stone floor before his door. . . . The lamp flickered. "Do you understand me?" he whispered doubtfully. He did not know, he did not want to know whether this question was addressed to his dead father or his unhappy mother. . . . He opened his drawer, reached into it. He quickly pointed the muzzle of the gun at his chest, felt anxiously for the space between two ribs, then, sobbing with despair, he pressed the trigger. He felt a shock, his eyes and his mouth flew open, he fell.

Many months later the physician who had refused to aid Levy was brought to trial. The physician declared:

"A woman called me up. In the first place I could hardly understand a word what she said on the telephone, she howled so that I could make out almost nothing. Moreover, when I heard that her name was Levy, I thought: I'd rather let the whole world perish than visit a Jew on a day like this—it was April 1, you know!"

His lawyer declared:

"I beg the court to take into consideration my client's patriotic attitude as well as his feelings of deep human revulsion toward a person named Levy on the anti-Jewish Boycott Day. The fact of this Levy's death cannot be imputed to my client. He would have died in spite of medical intervention. His self-inflicted wound was a mortal one. It is claimed that he continued to breathe for an hour. But who can prove that?"

"I can," said the landlord of 7 Market Place. "I am an Aryan," he said. "And I have lodged complaint against this physician. I consider his behaviour inhuman! I even think that . . ."

"Take care not to say anything libellous!" his cautious wife interrupted him.

She was reprimanded by the court.

The physician was fined one hundred marks.

The Aryan landlord was sent to a concentration camp the same day.

Feivel Does Not Die after All

HAVING run all the way from the *schul* to Castle Street, Feivel at once locked himself in his room. He dared not go out in the street again. He still rented a room from Frau Pilz, who had a thirty-five-year-old daughter named Elizabeth.

Frau Pilz and her daughter Elizabeth had gone out, unwilling to miss "a thing like that." "You don't get a show like this every day," said Elizabeth. Frau Pilz said nothing. But she had rosy cheeks today, like a young girl before her first meeting with a young man. Feivel, however, there is no use denying it—he himself did not deny it—remained in his room out of sheer cowardice. He had known such days before. Anti-Semitism was nothing new to him. He was a Ukrainian Jew.

And now Frau Pilz came home, all perspiring though it was only April 1, laden with news. She told her roomer everything, absolutely everything she had learned in town: that Kahn of the department store had been arrested, that the rabbi had been arrested, and that two Jews had been found shot, a certain Grünberg or Grünfeld and a certain Heinz Levy, a young student. "But I haven't said anything, I don't know anything, Herr Feivel. I am only repeating what I heard. . . . Don't laugh, Elizabeth! Leave the room!" And Elizabeth stumbled out into the kitchen, giggling stupidly.

Feivel was seized with panic. Everything gave way before it: his feeling of shame, and wretchedness that he should be ashamed on such a day as this; fearful, Ukrainian memories. . . . All that gave way completely, he could think only of the arrest which perhaps threatened him, of the violent, horrible death which, he knew now, had stricken two more Jewish inhabitants of this town. He had just been gloomily thinking about his dumb luck in 1920. At that time he had felt himself a happy man because he was finally granted a residence permit in Germany! It is easy to imagine with what feelings he thought back on that stroke of luck! And now all these memories were insignificant, ridiculous, non-existent. Stronger than anything else now was his dread of the fate that was befalling the Jews every day, even the "aristocrats among the Jews," the German Jews! Only Grünfeld—it couldn't be Grünberg, there was no Grünberg in the town—only this Grünfeld was an Eastern Jew. He had been a shark, Feivel had always despised

him, "but all men are equal before God, may he rest in peace. . . ."

The idea of leaving this town and Germany, the idea of fleeing, had always been present in his mind. The age-old instinct of the persecuted Jew had long ago whispered to him not to lose a day, "for nothing good can come of all this." But he hadn't had the courage to set out on his flight without a passport; he had suffered before from his lack of a birth certificate. . . . But now all that did not matter. Just to get away! He packed his suitcase with a frenzied haste that seemed absurd to his landlady.

Snivelling, unable to understand this seemingly lightning-like decision, she stood near him handing him a shirt, another shirt, shoes, two neckties, socks. She couldn't know how many generations of Feivels had played their part in her roomer's haste. As for herself, she had another worry: the room that would now be vacant. Feivel had to promise her that he'd stay with her again after his return. Feivel promised everything she asked. As if he could ever return! This woman had no idea how long the Feivels stay away once they leave. . . .

"Never before did I have such a nice roomer," she wept.

It was a critical moment. This compliment coming after all the insults, calumnies, and threats that he had been recently subjected to as a Jew—these simple words moved him. He was so sensitive to such words! And little more would have been needed—just a few more words—to make him change his plans, unpack his suitcase, and miss his unique opportunity to leave this country at a moment when terror provided the necessary impulse. Had he delayed now, the edge of his fear would have been blunted, he would have grown accustomed to it, he would have lost his capacity for action. Indeed, he almost began to hesitate simply because the landlady said: "Never again will I find a roomer as nice as you, Herr Feivel." Because she said honestly and simply: "I am so sorry for you, and I so hate you to think that we Germans have anything against you personally, Herr Feivel."

But then she added something ("And lucky it was that she did,"

Feivel always thought later with gratitude) that definitely made him decide not to unpack his suitcase.

"So you're really going to leave?" she asked, wiping away her tears. "I want to tell you again what I think about you Jews. It is just a pity," she said, a little wrathfully, "that you Jews can so often be recognized as Jews. And why on earth do all Jews have such conspicuous names as Kohn and Einstein and Rosenberg? Why do you Jews do that? You too, Herr Feivel! Yes, you! Why must your name be Feivel? Why don't you have a sensible name like Kunze or Wulle or Pilz, like me? I don't see why, do you?"

No, he didn't see why, either.

"You see!" she exulted and she went one honest and simple step further. "And today I looked at his picture again. After all, he looks quite decent with his little moustache and the nice little lock of hair on his forehead. He can't possibly be so bad as you think."

And so it came about that Feivel really left her and her giggling Elizabeth. He took his suitcase and quickly crossed the street to Herr Stiefel's house. He wanted to sit with the Fishmans until it was time to take his train, and he also wanted to say good-bye to Haskel Weiss and his wife. Of all the Eastern Jews who had made this town their second home, he was the first to leave it. The news spread like wild-fire among the other Jews. Frau Fishman ran to the Kleins, Frau Weiss to the Wolfs. And so they all heard about it. Feivel planned to take the night express to Vienna.

The Kleins and the Wolfs wanted to see him before his departure. They waited for darkness, but even then they were afraid of being recognized and caught by the Nazis. A Jew was easily recognized. Nazis wore uniforms, Jews did not. Anyone who walked around without a uniform was suspect. Anyone who was not light blond did well to cover his head with a broad-brimmed hat. A nose that was not quite straight, a hasty step, could seal your fate. Even those who wore no swastika in their lapel were

conspicuous. Jews wore no swastikas. No matter where they went they were conspicuous. Everybody who was not a Nazi was conspicuous to the Nazis.

"We must go to see him, it's the right thing to do," Herr S. Klein said to his wife. "But two people are more conspicuous than one. So I will go first and five minutes later you will follow me. And don't forget your umbrella!"

He went hurriedly down the stairs, trying not to make any noise—for of course there were Nazis in his very house as in every other house in town—and he thought: I hope it's raining. . . . He too had taken his umbrella as a matter of course and intended to open it right away. But it was not raining! There wasn't the slightest sign of rain! Had it been raining, the danger would have been smaller. He had meant to raise his collar, to pull in his head, to hold his umbrella quite low—then nobody would have recognized his Jewish beard. A violent downpour would have filled him with delight. But unhappily there was no torrential rain, unhappily not a single drop fell from the skies. It was a beautiful evening. That is, it was not a beautiful evening.

A little later Frau Klein slipped out of the house. Her daughter wanted to go with her, but Frau Klein said no. Even though this was a German town, Fräulein Klein had been given a strict upbringing, as strict as the upbringing given by anxious Jewish parents to their beautiful daughters in a small Polish town. For the past ten years she had been sewing her trousseau—she was now twenty-one years old. She was fabulously diligent and her trousseau was fabulously big and beautiful and rich. Lest something "happen" to her—her name was Miriam and she had deep, sad, black eyes—she was not allowed to go out unaccompanied. And on a night like this, not even in company. And so the mother bravely went alone. She thought she could hear the pounding of her heart. She had but to think of old Frau Shapiera and immediately tears rolled down her cheeks. She had heard the story only an hour before. Poor old woman!

That very day, at noon, old Frau Shapiera was sitting on a bench. For the past twenty-five years she had lived in this town, and in those twenty-five years she had often gone to the grove to watch the children playing in the sandbox and the birds hopping on the lawns. Even after January 30 she continued going to the grove, wrapped in her old winter coat, hiding her tired, freezing hands in its broad sleeves. Her children and children's children had tried in vain to explain to her the new era and the new Germans. She didn't believe them. What they said only made her suspicious. She asked herself what her children and grandchildren could be plotting, and why they were trying to prevent her from going to the grove. Just to show them that she had a mind of her own, she continued to take her walks, and when she sat on a bench she looked like an old Eastern Jewish woman who has well-meaning sons and daughters-in-law and "German" grandchildren as innumerable as pebbles on the beach—and memories of a Russian Jewish youth.

That day she sat in the grove all alone; not even the birds hopped around on the lawns, and all the children had remained in town. Then Nazis came marching through the grove, Nazis who had been in the marketplace. They saw this solitary Jewess. They were twenty Nazis, they marched four in a row, five rows of them.

"Stop!" a command resounded. "Get up, you filthy Jewess!"

When fright paralyses your limbs, it is hard to obey such orders. The old woman had no strength, no muscle obeyed her, she couldn't get up. But she could yell. And so she yelled in a shrill and heart-rending voice:

"Help! Help! Come help me!"

It was two o'clock in the afternoon and a few persons heard these anguished cries. They heard them from a distance and even stopped, but when they saw the Nazis no one came to her assistance. Nobody wanted to come near the Nazis, because the Nazis were now the state, the power, the judges, and the executioners—

they were omnipotent, more powerful than God, for God was far away in heaven, and the Nazis were here in town. The old Jewess saw through her spectacles that the people had halted at the edge of the grove and would come no farther. Then even her voice failed her, her eyes almost popped out of her head with fright, she let out a whimper, and became silent. One of the Nazis pushed her old back; she slid off the bench and fell on the cold sand. Two Nazis boys helped the trembling woman to her feet. "Run!" they ordered, and they shouted: "Hop, Jewess, hop!"

Then she began to hobble away; she tottered and wobbled, her arms fluttered, her black wig slid down on her face, her quivering mouth tried to hold her loose teeth—that was how she ran. And she ran toward the people at the edge of the grove. And these people saw the old woman coming toward them, pursued by the Nazis, who roared in chorus: "Go back to Jerusalem!" But nobody came forward to help the old woman. . . .

These were Frau Klein's anxious thoughts as she left the house five minutes after her husband. Unfortunately it was not a beautiful April 1, because it was not raining and consequently she could not open her umbrella. She only hoped that nobody would see her, that nobody would recognize her as a Jewess. Who would have foreseen that? You had to be afraid. An honest man, or woman, had to be afraid of being seen. . . . In other times this evening would have been beautiful; a pleasant little breeze was blowing. But now the breeze blew the rain away and kept her from opening her umbrella. Formerly Frau Klein would have said the clouds in the night sky were "marvellous"—they floated like small and big ships on the Dniester at Bendery and on the Black Sea at Odessa. . . . Even the moon was out, a half-moon. But now the shining moon was a nasty, unfriendly moon, it shed light on Castle Street, on the walls and people, and it was a great danger to be lighted by the moon. Any Nazis could, God forbid, approach Frau Klein, seize her by the arm, and say: "You have insulted the German nation! Follow me! You are under arrest!"

The Wolfs, too, decided not to go to Castle Street together. First Herr Wolf slipped out of the house. He was very depressed. His livelihood was imperilled. Herr Wolf was a travelling man.

"Travelling" sounds magnificent so long as you don't know what it entails. But we know what it entailed for Wolf: he travelled from village to village with sample cases that were not his. Herr Wolf called himself a travelling salesman, but pedlar would have been more accurate though less high-sounding. And now the Nazis were going to cancel all licences held by Jews! Just to be a Jew was bad enough, but to be a Jewish travelling man without a licence, that was inconceivable! What was to become of the Wolf family? For years Herr N. Wolf had gone on his rounds, had suffered hardships without complaining. He had never taken a vacation. He travelled only for business. He probably did not know that people could also travel for pleasure. It is true that he had undertaken a few long journeys, but it cannot be said that the Eastern Jew Wolf had undertaken them for his pleasure. His first serious journey, taken as an emigrant twenty-three years before, had brought him from his little East Galician village to Germany. After the outbreak of the war, Herr Wolf had been compelled to undertake the second great journey of his life—he had become an Austrian soldier and, taken from Germany to the Austrian eastern front, he had remained there for four years. At the end of 1918 he had come back to Germany—his third long journey. And only then did his little trips begin, from village to village.

Herr Wolf had always been satisfied, he was no adventurer. He took life as it came. But he wasn't satisfied when he thought of his children. So far as his children were concerned, he was a reckless adventurer. A foolhardy idea had taken hold of him at a time when these children had not yet reached school age. That idea tenaciously stuck in his head: never would his children carry sample cases as he did. For that reason he sent them to the university.

The Wolfs belonged to a quite special class of petty bourgeoisie: Eastern Jewish petty bourgeoisie. They had no garden plot, they never went to the theatre, to concerts, they had no radio—in all their lives they had seen perhaps only four movies! They had seen the last picture four years ago; it had been the first talking movie, they had gone to see it because they had been told that in this wonderful film an American Jewish actor sang “Kol Nidre” as in real life. But they had been so upset by that film, and had cried so much, that they had refused to enter a movie theatre ever since. And besides, to speak frankly, they had to save money. Movie tickets were expensive! They were stingy, these Wolfs, no doubt about it—but they were stingy for the sake of their sons. It is hard to say how they had conceived the idea of sending their sons to the university. Possibly the responsibility falls, once again, on the Jewish tradition, from which the Wolfs had learned with pride that “their” ancestors had been kings, prophets, or, at the very least, scholars of the holy books. They liked to read the surviving works of their famous ancestors. The whole world knows these works. And the Wolfs dreamed that their sons, too, would write such works or similar ones, or perhaps, with God’s help, even more beautiful and more famous ones. And that was why they were stingy and why they had painfully saved every pfennig to send their sons to the university after they finished high school. Of course the sons had to pay part of their expenses by tutoring. . . . If the Wolfs’ ancestors had been Protestant carpenters, butchers, bakers, or peasants, they would have had other dreams for their Protestant children: a large, modern carpenter shop with an electric plane, a circular saw, a hand saw, a fraising machine—or an ultra-modern farm with tractors and electric threshing machines, healthy cows and fertile fields. But the Wolfs were not Protestants, they couldn’t help that. And now all that had to be given up! How could his sons complete their studies if he could no longer contribute to their support? And their studies were almost finished!

Frau Fishman opened the door for Wolf. Though there was no

rain, he had raised his collar and pulled down his hat over his forehead. He had disguised himself, not for his own sake, but to please his wife. She had begged him, he explained, to conceal his face that way. And his wife would be there soon.

She was on her way. Breathlessly, she ran along close to the house walls. The half-moon shone in her face! At first she met nobody. But then she thought she heard steps behind her. Somebody seemed to be following her! When she turned around, she thought she saw a giant Nazi, he was perhaps a hundred yards away, but she distinctly saw that he held a sword in his right hand and a revolver in his left. At least she later swore that her pursuer had looked like that and had held these things in his hands. That she should have been pursued seemed to everyone present not only credible but natural. They congratulated the pale woman for having escaped a great danger unharmed. They doubted only the sword, although she indignantly swore that it had been a silver sword, positively, it had even sparkled!

"Maybe it was a blackjack or a horse-whip," Herr Feivel comforted her.

"Whatever it may have been," Herr S. Klein said firmly, "I propose that no one of us should speak of these things tonight."

But what else were they to talk about before the departure of the train?

They sat around the table; it was an extension table, there was room for everyone. Herman, too, could have sat at this table. But he refused. He sat alone by the window. He listened to the conversation with one ear. He tried desperately not to think of Heinz Levy. He tried to conceal his agitation. But every noise from the street made him start.

With winks and gestures Yossel Fishman explained to his visitors that his son was somewhat "touched in the head," and that they needn't bother about him.

They didn't bother about him. They didn't even bother about

Feivel. They didn't speak of his departure, or of his future plans, or even of their own worries and fears. Somebody proposed a game of *Doppelkopf*. That way, they would not be talking and thinking only about "all that." Then time would pass quickly; there was nothing to do but take the cards in your hands and play. Anything rather than think of Feivel's departure and your own worries!

They played for twenty minutes, and then they gave it up. Never before had they played *Doppelkopf* as they played it today. They played and played and nobody was winning. All of a sudden the players realized that everybody was losing! No, that was no kind of game! . . . So they had to fall back on talk. And the result was what could have been expected. Since they were all trying not to speak about one definite subject, they were irresistibly driven to speak of that very subject, the death of Grünfeld and of young Levy. When they noticed that they were in the midst of this most unpleasant subject, it was too late. Nevertheless, they all cleverly succeeded in extricating themselves from the dangers of this conversation. As if by previous agreement, they all spoke of the two men as having died in the most natural manner. No revolvers, no bullets, no shots were mentioned. All avoided these terrible words.

"I was talking with Grünfeld only yesterday," said Herr N. Wolf dejectedly.

"What did he say? Did you notice any sign of his—disease? Did he drop any hints in his conversation?"

"He said 'Good afternoon.'"

"What else?"

"Nothing else. Just 'Good afternoon.'"

"Very suspicious. I would have been struck by that right away," said Yossel Fishman. "What a curious conversation! 'Good afternoon,' and nothing else. . . ."

"I also saw his partner. In a uniform. . . ."

"You know how well acquainted I was with Grünfeld," said Yossel Fishman. "I often told him: Dear Grünfeld, take the ad-

vice of an experienced man. Drop that Linke! You'll lose the shirt off your back, I told him again and again."

"He never listened to you," Frau Fishman sighed.

"No, he never listened to me," Yossel Fishman confirmed. "About three months ago, when he lost his mother, he came here to unburden his heart. Let me tell you that he often came here to ask my advice. He sat at this very table, right where Feivel is sitting now. . . ."

Feivel jumped up in fright and pushed his chair to the wall.

"My wife served him fish and a glass of schnaps. He was really educated, I want you to know, and not proud at all, quite the contrary, and he never made any fuss about accepting our food. It was only my advice that he never accepted. The trouble is he wasn't a businessman, not a careful businessman. . . ."

And while they were absorbed in this most fascinating subject, Frau Klein could restrain herself no longer; she proposed that her husband should tell them at once what he knew about Herr Rabbiner and about Herr Kahn of the department store. And so it was that they heard some quite incredible things. Feivel especially would never have believed these things about the German Jews of this town. "So there are some fine men among them!" He shook his head, deeply moved. This half-admission from a Ukrainian who never forgot anything was quite an event!

And this is what the *shochet* S. Klein told them:

The rabbi and Kahn of the department store had been arrested the evening before. Of the four hundred German Jews in town, fifteen persons had formed a "Society of National German Israelites," under the chairmanship of a certain Herr Siegfried Naumann, rug salesman in the firm of Max Kahn, Inc. These fifteen persons had invited all the German Jews in town to a meeting. A few months earlier there had been another meeting, but at that time the fifteen members of the society had been the only ones present. But the day before, on the eve of the Boycott, almost all the German Jews in town had come, even Herr Rabbiner and even

Herr Max Kahn. Many perhaps had come out of sheer curiosity, many others because of their fear for the coming day and their hope of hearing some words of comfort. At any rate, the lecture hall of the hotel, the German Emperor, was packed to capacity. It was richly decorated with black, white, and red banners. Herr Naumann was not only an efficient rug salesman, he was also a clever window-dresser. A pianist played military marches. Two Nazis who had been commissioned by the police to watch the gathering sat in the first row.

The fifteen members of the society stood and sang a few nationalist songs. The four hundred guests in the audience, thinking of the next day with worried faces, listened without pleasure to these songs usually sung by their worst enemies. The two Nazis surveyed distrustfully the silent, hostile audience.

Before Herr Naumann had begun his lecture, the fifteen Jews raised their right arm in salute! It was the Nazi salute! A ripple of disapproval ran over the audience. In this uneasy atmosphere Herr Naumann began his lecture. At first he whiningly criticized the doctrine of blood and race. Gradually his speech became more assured. Origin and race, he said, were less important than character and ideals. In his view there were not 565,000 "Jews" in Germany, but only good Jews and bad Jews. "No one has anything against us decent Israelites. There is a tremendous difference between an Israelite who comes from a family long established in Germany and imbued with German culture, and a newly arrived Jewish *schnorrer* from Tarnopol who may have cut off his Jewish whiskers but has retained his Asiatic character. . . . We National German Israelites approve of the Führer's national revolution; it is in conformity with our own political ideas. We have nothing in common with an Isaac Kanalgitter from Tarnopol. We must work to obtain recognition of our attitude by the National Socialist government, and to be exempted from its general Jewish policy. . . ."

At these words, the rabbi jumped up and cried to the speaker: "You are not a Jew! You should be ashamed of yourself speaking like that! You are not a Jew!"

"No, I am an Israelite, a German Israelite!" Herr Naumann retorted. His features had turned to stone.

"You have no sense of responsibility!" cried Herr Kahn, standing up. "It is your employer who says this to you."

"Here you are not my employer!" Herr Naumann replied, turning dark red.

Herr Kahn asked for the floor, to make a short declaration. Never before, he said, had he thought it possible for a co-religionist to speak so ignobly of other Jews. These words he almost shouted, in great agitation, but then he regained control of himself, grew much calmer, even began to smile. "I have taken the trouble to look into my family origins," he said, and his smile became broader. "Not from Tarnopol, don't be afraid, Herr Naumann, but from Vilna. In the year 1656 one of my ancestors came to Germany, an unhappy refugee with an 'Asiatic character.' In the documents I have discovered I read about one hundred and thirty co-religionists who arrived in Lübeck from Poland in a most unhappy state. I also read about a collection that was taken up for them in the Portuguese synagogue in Hamburg. You see, Herr Naumann, my ancestors, too, were *schnorrrers*. But I can claim no credit for the fact that these ancestors of mine came to Germany almost three hundred years ago. Had they arrived only twenty years ago, I could take no credit for that either. The man who is today Chancellor of the Reich crossed the German border only twenty years ago! I don't know whether every man living in Germany, Aryan or Jew, is able to ascertain where his ancestors were three hundred years ago, and who they were. And it is not because of anything Herr Naumann himself did that his name is Siegfried Naumann and not Siegfried Kanalgitter. . . ."

At this point the two Nazis interrupted Herr Kahn. They de-

clared that he and the rabbi were under arrest! The audience ostentatiously walked out of the hall when the fifteen members of the society began enthusiastically to thunder another song. . . .

"And only those fifteen *meshuggene* stayed?" Feivel wanted to know the exact number.

"Only those fifteen," confirmed Herr S. Klein, who had heard the whole story that very day at noon from the German Jew Siegmund Edelmann.

"But it is very decent of the German Jews," Feivel said approvingly, "to have taken our part that way."

"So the Jews of Tarnopol should be persecuted whereas those fifteen crackpots should be spared! Disgusting!"

"If a Nazi said these things, it would be understandable. But a Jew, like this Naumann!"

"I'd bet he's not a real Jew!"

"But he is! I'm positive!"

"How can a Jewish son insult his father so?"

"He insulted my father, not his!"

"He insulted his own too!"

"His father came from Posen, I think," said Herr Klein. "Not from Tarnopol!"

"But my father is from Tarnopol!" cried Herr N. Wolf.

"Don't get excited. Why should you? Of the four hundred Jews living here, only fifteen think like this Naumann."

"They are *meshugge*!"

"No, they're criminal!"

"Kahn will surely fire him now!"

"For the moment Kahn is in jail."

"But as soon as he is released, he'll fire him. You may rely on Herr Kahn. He has a Jewish brain! No wonder, if he comes from Vilna."

"Three hundred years ago . . . maybe we're even related to him," Frau Dvora Weiss dreamed.

"At any rate, he's a very clever man, this Herr Kahn!"

"Please let me know whether he does fire this anti-Semite Naumann. I'll be very curious to know," said Feivel. "As soon as I get to Vienna I will send you my address."

Until then Herman hadn't said a word. But now he suddenly opened his mouth and said:

"Father, I want to go with Herr Feivel tonight."

Once upon a time, many, many years ago, a young unknown Eastern Jew from Strody on the river Stryj went abroad to look for happiness. This young man was Yossel Fishman. At that time his father, old Leib Fishman, desperately fought against this plan. But the old man's protests were in vain.

And now Yossel's son wanted to go out into the world. It is true that Herman's method of carrying out his project was not what his father's had been. Herman made his intention known in a somewhat abrupt manner, and what particularly provoked his father's wrath was that the train he planned to take was to leave in no more than one hour! Yossel Fishman thought bitterly of the idyllic times when he had dreamed and talked about America for years before all his father's objections had been overcome. And now he had to make up his mind in one hour! At this moment it didn't occur to him that not only his sons but also the times were different. On April 1, 1933, plans had to be quickly conceived and quickly carried out. Even on that date there were all too many who were as slow in carrying out their plans as Yossel Fishman had been more than twenty years before. . . .

He was a cautious man and he had never liked to make decisions, especially irrevocable decisions. Furthermore, he really didn't want his son to leave him. It was quite simply that. He probably thought chiefly of himself—the father left behind—but, after all, he was not very clear about his own feelings. He could therefore break out in unrestrained lamentations, after the first shock had passed. He didn't restrain himself by any means, and he let Herman know quite clearly what his thoughts on the matter were.

What kind of ideas were these? And where did he want to go? And to whom would he go? And was it the same story he had told his father yesterday? "And do you know what he told me? He wants to be a farmer in Palestine! A farmer! What have I done to deserve this?" he shouted, forgetting his guests. "What do you want of me? What does the whole world want of me? What have I done to all of you that you should punish me like this? I never stole, I never murdered! And I never incited anybody to steal, to murder, to make war or to commit God knows what crimes! But what good did my honesty do me? A whole country is against me, and now my son is against me, too!"

"I am not against you," Herman defended himself.

"If you want to leave me, you are against me!" Yossel Fishman repeated. And then he found a telling argument. "You can't go away!" he exulted. "In the first place you are stateless and you have no passport. In the second place you won't be admitted anywhere without a passport."

But then it came to light that Feivel had no passport, either, and that he intended "to find a way" at the border.

Now Yossel Fishman's rage was directed against Feivel. For a moment he was on the verge of reproaching him bitterly for undertaking such an adventure. But after a few minutes—he needed all that time to reach a decision—he decided that it was rather his duty to warn him against this adventure. But Feivel shrugged his shoulders and declared that he would be an adventurer only if he stayed in Germany.

During this discussion Herman had gone to his room, and now he came back with a small suitcase. He announced that he had packed everything he needed for his trip, that the only thing lacking was money for a ticket. Yossel dared not face the fact that his son was serious. With trembling hands he began to shuffle cards.

"Let's play another game of *Doppelkopf*," he proposed hoarsely. "Who's playing with me? Sit down at the table, Herman," he implored, "otherwise you will really make me believe that you're go-

ing. And, gentlemen, please take your cards! Please, let's begin! Please! I will play first!" And he hastily played a card.

But no one joined him. They didn't even pick up the cards he had dealt. In their embarrassment they were busy breaking sugar cubes into little pieces.

Yossel Fishman was on the verge of tears. He gave up the struggle. He put his cards down.

"You aren't human," he said softly. "You can't understand me. And you don't want to understand me. You don't want to help me. All right, then, go, for all I care. For all I care you may go to the moon."

"If I were a Jewish father," said Haskel Weiss, tapping his wooden leg, "I would be glad to have my son go away today."

"Of all things!" Yossel Fishman gasped. "What business is it of yours? How do you come to be giving me advice, Herr Weiss?"

"Herr Fishman," said Herr Weiss, tapping his wooden leg even more emphatically than before, "Herr Fishman, I am not giving any advice, not even for a hundred marks! I refuse—do you understand me—I refuse to give advice to a man like you, a grown-up man, so to say! Why should I? Have you asked me?"

"I should ask you! Hah!"

"Herr Fishman," Herr Weiss said angrily, "I want to tell you something confidentially and everybody else can listen, too. I regret to say that I am fifty years old, otherwise I would go with them without a moment's hesitation!"

"Haskel, stop saying such things," said Frau Dvora Weiss, in tears. She sat near Herman, looking at him as if he were her own son.

"Besides, I have this German wooden leg to lug around," grumbled Herr Weiss.

"Herr Weiss," said Herr Wolf, "if I were fifty years old, I would certainly go. Unfortunately I am fifty-five."

"You wouldn't go," said Frau Wolf.

"How do you know?" Herr Wolf demanded angrily.

"I know," his wife assured him in a positive tone. "You can believe me!"

"I am sixty," Herr Klein sighed. "But if there was some way of getting out of here without papers—I have no papers, you know—and with my wife and daughter . . ."

"My dear people," said Herr Feivel, "in my opinion the outlook for those who remain is black." And he predicted sadly: "You'll all be killed."

Frau Wolf began to weep, then Frau Klein began to weep.

"Nothing will happen to us," Yossel Fishman replied. "You can believe me, ladies."

"And I'm telling you," Feivel declared, "that you'll all die."

"Herr Feivel, I know the Germans better than you do!"

"Did you arrive here three or five years before me?" Feivel asked sarcastically.

"When our business was good," said Frau Fishman, trying to help her husband and struggling desperately against her tears, "many Germans came to our shop and they always had long talks with my husband."

"The Germans are good people," Yossel assured his guests in a faltering voice. Everybody noticed that his uncertain words were addressed to his son, who already had his hat and overcoat on. "It's only the government that may kill us. But can the government come to each of us separately and kill each separately? Today was a hard day for the Jews. But you can see for yourselves how decent the Germans are! Did they kill us? Are we dead?"

"We are dead," Feivel said. But then he corrected himself darkly: "We are as good as dead."

"But a few are really dead," Haskel Weiss said. "Here we are talking and talking, and we seem to have forgotten that. And those who aren't murdered by the Nazis will be prevented from living. The Germans, I am telling you, are very tricky people! They will force us all either to flee or to die!"

Yossel Fishman lost all self-control. "Don't give my son ideas!" he cried furiously.

"Quiet! The Nazis will hear us!" Frau Wolf warned.

"Why do you talk to him about running away?" cried Yossel Fishman. "And should I run away too? Should I maybe leave here again? I have wandered around enough in my life! Where shall I go now? Just tell me, you're so clever, just tell me where I should go?"

He was no longer concerned with that day and with the Nazis. Yossel Fishman was raging against Haskel Weiss and the others who not only were refusing to help him keep his son but, on the contrary, were doing everything to fortify the boy in his resolution. His anger carried him away. He threatened to turn them all out of his house, in the middle of the night, into the street. No, he didn't care how late it was. Fortunately there was no need for it today.

The whole house was still full of laughter, cries, songs. To celebrate the great day, the German radio stations had extended their programmes of dance music, songs, and military bands to three o'clock in the morning. These programmes were constantly interrupted by news reports from Kassel, Frankfurt, Hamburg, and other cities. Jews had been arrested, thrashed, their businesses closed, "because they had insolently provoked the German nation."

Then again came Rhineland songs.

Next door, at the Wunders', they were singing.

Also at the Schuberts'.

The Korns had guests, Kupke and Anna. Emil Korn was dancing with Anna, and Kupke with Elli, a lovely waltz.

"What a beautiful programme!" exulted Anna.

"It was a great day!" cried Kupke.

"Children! It's a long time since I have had such a good time!" Elli said glowingly.

"The children are asleep; maybe we ought to be quieter," Emil ventured.

"Say," Kupke said menacingly—an hour ago they had drunk *Bruderschaft*—"say, Elli, is your Emil a Jew in disguise?"

"Let's drink to the joke!" Elli laughed shrilly.

"Let's have a good look at him, let's see whether he really is a Jew," Anna giggled. . . .

"You can shout as much as you want," Haskel Weiss said. "You don't scare me. You don't scare anybody. We've seen worse men than you today. And I know what to do." He pulled out his purse.

He had no fortune, this Haskel. At the moment he was a dealer in old clothes. But even in this trade the depression made itself felt. Buying became unbelievably hard. Nobody wanted to dispose of a pair of trousers, no matter how worn. And selling was no easier. Though his prices for old clothes were low, buyers were scarcer and scarcer, because the poor people interested in old clothes had grown even poorer during the depression. No wonder Haskel had little money. Nevertheless, he now said to Herman:

"I have no son whom I can send away from here. But I understand you perfectly. And I'll give you the price of your trip, my dear Herman." With a magnificent fatherly gesture he drew out of his purse a banknote, his only banknote.

"He doesn't want your twenty marks!" cried Yossel Fishman, offended. "Here! Here's fifty marks! If you have to go, take my money!"

In the twenty minutes that followed, not much happened. Only Feivel made various statements which in the end proved completely contradictory.

"I wouldn't even think," he said angrily, "of undertaking such a dangerous trip with such an inexperienced boy!"

As nobody answered him, he used even more direct language.

"What's the idea," he said brutally, "of forcing yourself on me without even asking me whether I want you?"

Again, nobody answered him.

"Without so much as a by your leave, just getting on board my train!" he railed.

This time Haskel Weiss broke the silence. He addressed himself not to Feivel, but to Herman.

"Don't take Feivel's train," he said. "Take the other express train and go to the Austrian frontier by yourself."

This didn't suit Feivel, either.

"He should go by himself? Are you crazy? A young man who has never been abroad, who has never set foot outside this German town, he should travel alone? Not on your life! Of course he'll come with me!"

Yossel Fishman sat beside his son, but neither of them could speak. Yossel stared at the table, at the empty teaglasses and the slices of lemon on the saucers, at the scattered cards. He felt as if his heart were slowly shrinking. . . . Herman resisted the feelings that throbbed within him, kept his eyes down, pressed against the back of his chair, biting his lower lip. Now he was frightened by his own courage and he would gladly have burst into tears. But suddenly he recalled the day when he had found a job in the factory, when he had been attacked in the street, and when he had been as defenceless as a poor cat chased into the river by mischievous boys. No, he was no longer afraid to go.

Frau Klein toyed nervously with her handkerchief. She felt the need, a very strong need, of saying something. But not on her own authority. She felt too unimportant in this difficult moment. Therefore she said:

"My husband always says: man is powerless against fate."

"My husband says the same thing," Frau Wolf whispered, wringing her hands.

But the husbands didn't say a word. What they would have liked now was to start a really interesting noisy game of *Doppelkopf*. They had got themselves into a nice mess! Not they, really, but the Fishmans. But they, too, really they were all in it.

"Put up something to eat—for the train," Frau Dvora Weiss said. She had a whimpering voice like a real mother.

Frau Fishman ran sobbing to the kitchen, returning with a large package. Herman unpacked it, putting only some bread and cheese into his suitcase. . . .

Only after his son and Feivel had departed could Yossel Fishman speak again. He stood at the window with drooping shoulders, reproaching himself for not having said a single warm word to his son. Who could tell when and whether he would ever see him again? . . .

"I even forgot to tell him," he murmured in confusion, "that he should write us often."

Then he suddenly remembered something else.

"At the store today I found a letter from Jacob," he stammered. "Herr Hummel opened it for me. I told you before what a fine man he is. He came to the store just to be with me. There are such decent people. It is good to know that you live in the same house with such fine people. . . ." He again lost the thread of his thought, he suddenly forgot what he was going to say.

"And what does your Jacob write?" Frau Fishman inquired.

"He wrote," said Yossel Fishman, awakening from his trance, "that he is doing well, and not to worry about him. He is still in Berlin."

And he began to weep; bitter, helpless tears rolled down his trembling beard. "Now I am alone, without children," he sobbed as though in apology. "And I am an old man. . . ."

On that day he was not yet fifty.

Somebody's laughter rang out in the house.

Anna and Kupke were just leaving Korn's apartment.

"It's probably some Jews making that noise," Anna supposed. "Probably the Fishmans."

"Impossible," said Kupke. "No Jew is laughing tonight!"

It was nearly three o'clock in the morning.

The German radio stations were just ending their special programmes.

Flight Again

NOTHING had happened yet. The streets were still quiet. But people were busy checking their watches with the public clocks. Nobody was deceived by the tense silence. It had been announced in advance that they would begin only at ten o'clock, but then "spontaneously and as one man." But it was not ten o'clock yet. The Berliners knew they had something extraordinary to look forward to. Bedecked with little black, white, and red flags and swastika streamers; the streetcars and the buses rolled through the big city.

And on the stroke of ten, really "as one man," the Nazis began their propaganda parades at Wittenbergplatz, in the western part of Berlin, and simultaneously in all other sections of the great city. The uniformed Nazis were accompanied by women of all ages: friends, sweethearts, and wives of the men in brown. They marched through the streets, shouting in chorus the slogans that appeared on the signs they were carrying. For instance: NONE SHALL STARVE—NONE SHALL FREEZE—BUT EVERY SINGLE JEW MUST BE KILLED.

On the streetcars they pasted bright stickers proclaiming: "Death to the Jews!" Every lamppost became a billboard. Superb organization was evident behind it all, everything had been prepared, nothing left to chance. The bright-coloured stickers were printed clearly, the letters were beautifully legible, the backs well gummed. Before every house where Jewish doctors or lawyers had their offices there were sandwich men. On their signs you could read: JEW! BEWARE! CONSULTATIONS FORBIDDEN! No Jew had been for-

gotten. Over a period of months, detailed lists had been drawn up.

At Potsdamerplatz the cafés were almost empty. Fewer people than usual were at the tables. But at near-by Leipzigerplatz, before Wertheim's department store, dense crowds pressed around the boycott pickets stationed at the large open doors.

The whole length of Leipzigerstrasse was as turbulent as for some extraordinary popular celebration. Friedrichstrasse was the same. Despite the great crowds, traffic was not obstructed—police and Nazis saw to that. There had to be order, after all. What would happen to a great metropolis if traffic regulations were violated? Exceptionally strong police detachments were stationed before the banks. But no bills had been posted on bank buildings. It was only on stores that posters informed the German people that dealing with Jews involved mortal peril.

Toward eleven o'clock the first Jewish stores began to close. But the Nazi pickets remained in front of them. Groups of people in Sunday clothes conversed with them. Others looked at the window displays of the closed stores. "Keep moving! Don't stop!" they were rudely told. Pamphlets were distributed. There was laughter, many talked loudly with one another, many were silent, many whispered, many stared straight ahead, many were in a hurry, many took their time, many were very thirsty and went to beer gardens where they ate frankfurters with mustard on rolls and drank foaming beer, and more foaming beer, for they were thirsty, and then again went out into the street, laughing, chattering, exchanging filthy jokes about the Jews, shouting "Heiltla!" to strangers, shouting "Heiltla!" to the boycott pickets, then they were thirsty again, went back to the beer gardens, again drank foaming beer, and a schnapps besides, went out into the streets again, sang nationalist songs, wished long life to the government and to every member of the government, again grew thirsty, again went to a beer garden, drank, drank, drank, drank, again reeled in the streets, jostled passers-by, shouted, roared, yelled, broke a few shop windows,

laughed, again tumbled into a bar, and the police still saw to it that the traffic was not obstructed.

In the northern section, in Königstrasse, near the city hall, at Alexanderplatz, the traffic was difficult to manage, and the police had a hard time in certain places, especially where several Jewish stores were being picketed in one street. Consequently the police completely vanished from these streets, only the Nazis and the mob thirsty for entertainment remaining.

On the large windowpanes of the north-side branch of the Hermann Tietz department store, now closed, a huge sign was painted in brown: ATTENTION, DANGER! TO PALESTINE! DEATH TO THE JEWS! CHASE THE JEWS OUT!

Non-Jewish store-owners had put up posters framed in black, white, and red with the inscription GERMAN FIRM, and their doors were wide open. Nazis ran from one of these stores to another, with collection lists. Even in the street they could be heard saying menacingly: "Well, business is fine today, isn't it!" They said: "Well, now we've strangled your Jewish competitors once and for all!" They said: "Well, haven't we done a good job?" They said: "We'll rid you of Jews for the rest of your life! But only death comes free! Here is the list!"

I was unfamiliar with this section of the city. I looked for a street sign—it was Münzstrasse. According to my map, the police building was quite near. But there was not a policeman in sight. The street was black and brown with people, the houses were grey, the doorways dark as traps; one bar edged another; small, low-ceilinged shops—drygoods, cheap jewellery, watches, clothing on the instalment plan; flashily made-up girls; peanut venders; undersized, dark figures with brutal faces, every other one wearing a swastika. A few stores had their iron shutters down. But too late—everywhere on the sidewalks there were piles of glass fragments, the remnants of smashed display windows. . . . The German nation had been organized into a bandit gang by a terrorist govern-

ment! If today's booty proved satisfactory, woe to the Jews and all new victims after them. . . . I wandered as through a labyrinth. It seemed to me that I was in a ghostly fair, surrounded by insolent pickpockets, tramps, card-sharks, who had all donned some kind of fantastic uniform and were flaunting bright round badges. . . .

I had been in the street for five hours. At first I was seized by a deep horror. I felt ashamed for these beasts, parading their armed might with their drunken supporters. But I felt no fear. I felt only hatred, impotent hatred. And loneliness, infinite loneliness. I was so alone.

Karl Rascher was in Prague. He had actually succeeded in crossing the frontier. Three days before, I had received a letter from him telling me of a safe way to get out of Germany. Until yesterday I had been unable to reach a decision. Now I knew that I would leave. I wanted to go to Paris. I had just enough money to get there. . . .

I sat down in one of the small cafés. And I forgot for long minutes that I was in Berlin. I even forgot this day and the recent weeks and everything that had happened. I day-dreamed of a beautiful city where Balzac and Victor Hugo and Emile Zola had lived and worked. I dreamed of days in Paris that would belong to me, days I could call my own, days that would not be historic. I dreamed of an existence in which I would not be compelled to live through one chapter of tragic history after another. I had had enough. I was dead tired. I wanted to get away.

A man gave me a push. "I am sorry," I said. He said nothing. He sat down at my table. He wore high boots and a brown shirt buttoned up to the neck. His look was that of a murderer! With a sick feeling in my stomach I paid my cheque and quickly stood up. I went out of the café. I looked back, and saw that the man was following me. He had a peculiar way of walking, he hardly lifted his feet from the ground. Was it only an accident that he was following me? I suddenly stopped. He stopped too! I moved on again.

So did he! I felt that I was turning pale, and slowed my steps. I tried to mix with the crowd. But still I heard his dragging steps behind me. He was quite close on my heels! I felt his eyes on my neck! Suddenly I turned, dodging to the left, but he blocked my way!

"Where is your swastika?" he hissed at me.

"I am a Jew," I said, trying to appear unperturbed.

"Give me a cigarette," he said.

"I haven't got any."

"So you won't give me one?"

"Why are you following me?" I asked.

"You'll find out soon enough," he grinned. He turned around and made a sign to a group of Nazis standing in front of a store.

I took advantage of that moment to jump down from the sidewalk. The flood of people pushing forward made my flight easier. But I had hardly gone a few steps when a shrill whistle cut through the air! The throng that filled the whole width of the street was startled—many stopped to listen. In this decisive moment I succeeded in taking a few more steps and stopping behind an empty automobile. I could see that they were looking for me on the other side of the street. At the same time a curious crowd began to gather at the spot where I had stood with the Nazi a short while ago. Many were in a great hurry, they began to run, they bumped into one another, an inextricable rush of people formed between me and the Nazis who were trying to find me. This was my chance! Quick as lightning I looked for an escape. On the door of a house I suddenly saw Hebrew letters on a white-enamel sign. Under them, in German: "Kosher restaurant on the 1st floor." I squeezed through the crowd; they still did not understand what was going on! I jumped into the doorway! I stood breathless for half a minute behind the door, leaning my head against the cold wood. I heard my blood pounding in my ears. The air trembled before my eyes. I ran quickly upstairs, tore open a door. A bearded man and a plump woman stood before me.

The man stretched out his arm toward me and pulled me into his apartment. "Come quick! I'll lock the door! We were standing behind the curtains, we saw everything. Sit down, young man."

There were twenty tables in the dining room, but none of them was occupied. The plump woman said in a mixture of Yiddish and German: "We are usually crowded, there is never a seat empty, the door opens again and again, new people come in, some cheerful and some sad, but today no one comes to us. And it is better so."

"S' *zalking*, Hannah!" said the man. "Come in, please. Sit down on the sofa. Take a rest. Are you from Berlin? Then where are you from, if I may ask? And what are you doing in Berlin to-day of all places? In a little town, for instance, in Central Germany, it is certainly less dangerous. Of course, it is none of my business, but how do you happen to be walking in such a dangerous street today? Don't you know that only thieves and burglars and bad women live here? We Jews haven't dared to leave our apartments for a long time now, and today less than ever. Well, you were lucky to get away. Are you hungry by any chance? I invite you to eat with us, you're my guest. No, no! What can you be thinking of? A Jew must accept an invitation on the Sabbath! Why do you shake your head? Hannah, he is embarrassed! Are you a Jew or aren't you a Jew? Well, then? You don't have to tell me who and what you are! I have a good knowledge of people! At the first glance I know who and what a man is! And so, Hannah, set the big table for him, the best table, the one with eight leather chairs! And wipe them all! But no, what am I saying! It is *Shabbos*! Don't wipe them! But you must eat alone, young man; we have eaten already. Do you want to wash your hands? Outside in the hall you'll find a pitcher with water and a wash-basin. You must have lost your hat in the street. Hannah, give him one of my hats. Hannah, he looks, *nebbich*, very frightened! Hannah, give him a nice piece of fish, a piece from the middle, with lots of sauce! You must be a German Jew, if I may say so. Not quite? What do you mean, not quite?

Hannah, did you hear that? His papa is from Galicia! What do you say to that! *Sholem aleichem, sholem aleichem*, young man! And where does your father come from, if I may ask? Maybe we are even related a little? From Strody? Oi! It is really a pity that I don't come from Strody! Unfortunately I come from near Cracow. No, eat, go on eating, don't let me disturb you! Hannah, stop looking into his face all the time! Hannah, don't cry, go to the kitchen if you must cry! I really prefer to be alone with you. . . . Good, so now we're alone. Let me tell you, young man, that we have a son, an only son, and for the last four days he has been in Brussels. And this son is your age. And so she cries, my wife. And why does she cry? I will tell you frankly, after all you're the son of a compatriot of ours, that unfortunately I haven't had much luck with my only son. What shall I say? He is a complete German; he grew up here in Berlin and all his friends are *goyim*. I always told him: My son, you think that because you don't go to the synagogue and don't wear phylacteries and have forgotten what it means to be a Jew and what the duties of a Jew are, we Jews will be better off? My son, I would say to him, to Jews such as you the anti-Semites are saying: You invade our economic life, our science, politics, literature, dance halls! . . . Hannah, bring his soup! Well, how do you like the soup? I could have told you in advance that you'd like this soup. . . . But my son always wanted to be smarter than his papa from near Cracow, because—psh, psh!—he is a Berliner! Father, he said, if we Jews keep out of German life and always stay among ourselves, then we are a foreign body, and this is the most dangerous argument the anti-Semites can use. . . . My son, I replied, the anti-Semites don't need any arguments, all they need is Jews and they make no differences among Jews, only the Jews make differences. . . . Well, he listened to me as you'd listen to a cat. . . . Would you like a little more soup? No? Hannah, you can serve his meat course! Would you like some horse-radish with it? I could tell in advance that you'd like some horse-radish! Naturally my German son would never eat horse-radish with his meat.

And why? Just to annoy me! As if I could be annoyed! I only pitied him! . . . Two weeks ago a young gentleman came to see him, it was the first time he ever came here and my son was not at home. I saw this young gentleman looking with amazement at my beard and nose. And what do you think I found out? My son's friend, who had known him for many years, had no idea that my son was a Jew! What else could my son be! I cried. . . . Well, that's the kind of a son I have! But as he wasn't home, I invited his friend to come in. I offered him a glass of tea, he was a decent man, I never make mistakes in judging people, and I said to him: My dear sir, I said to him, what have you talked about with my son all these years? Never about himself? Is there anything more important, I am asking you, I asked my son's friend, than the Jewish question for a Jew? . . . Ah, my son had talked with him about all sorts of things, but never about the Jews. And at that I never did find out what kind of important matters they discussed all the time they knew each other. Unfortunately his friend refused to tell me. You mustn't think I was offended by his refusal. No, I wasn't offended a bit. . . . And now my son is in Brussels. And why is he in Brussels? On some business he never wanted to talk about! And maybe now he is finally thinking about his father and his father's father, and maybe now he'll become, in Brussels, what he never was in Berlin: a Jew. It's a great misfortune for a young man to lose his home. But who can tell if it isn't all for the best? After all, in misfortune man begins to understand himself, who he is and what mistakes he has made. Do you think that Job owed nothing to his misfortunes? And often you learn more in one day than in an entire lifetime. I hope that today my son is thinking of his mother and father and also of himself. . . . Hannah, serve the compote! No, don't sit down, I still have a word to say to the young man. . . . So now you know why my wife cried before. That's how women are. I, to tell you the truth, I don't get upset at all about my son. I don't even think of him. Let him do whatever he pleases. . . . But now let's talk about something else. What do you think

of today's events? For the last two months we've had a new government, and how much misery it has already brought on us! It has taken us Jews almost two thousand years from Jerusalem to the European ghetto. And for scarcely a hundred years we've been leading a human life—let's say an almost human life. But here comes a new government, it isn't three months old yet, but that's enough. . . ."

There were still four hours before my train. I had my ticket, I had carefully gone over all my instructions, I had written two more letters, one to my father, and one to Marie. . . .

To avoid the sight of the uniformed rabble and the drunken celebrations in the street, I went, as I had often done during the last miserable weeks, to a movie theatre. But the picture—like many German pictures of that chaotic time—was a faithful reflection of the country, the people, and the streets: half-madmen, debauchees, pools of blood, beatings, corpses, criminals. . . .

After I left the theatre, I continued the film in my mind. But it had ceased to be a story of individuals; now it dealt with collective murderers, gigantic robber bands. . . . There is a simple method of slandering and lying and torturing and beating and robbing and murdering with impunity. Failures of all classes can freely develop their anti-social aptitudes. They are no longer slanderers, liars, sadists, robbers, and murderers if they become anti-Semites. By becoming an anti-Semite the worst anti-social wretch can make a career as a politician and statesman. . . .

I was thinking that as I got into the train. I was not sad. I was only filled with loathing when I looked out of the window. Everywhere could be seen criminals in brown uniforms. . . .

Three o'clock in the morning.

The express rushed with a roar through a tunnel. The night was heart-breaking. I was alone in my compartment. I would have been glad to go to sleep, to sleep deeply, without dreams, I was

dog-tired, but it wasn't safe to fall asleep. Trains going toward the frontier were often inspected. I had to stay awake.

The train stopped.

Fulda.

A chubby man entered my compartment.

He had a little belly, he was bald, close-shaven, his little cheeks shone as though polished. He had no luggage, just his raincoat and a green hat. He sat facing me.

After less than five minutes he introduced himself.

"My name is Bayer," he said, bowing. "Skins and leathers." His small eyes blinked jovially.

"Mayer," I said bowing as he did.

"Bayer and Mayer! What a strange coincidence! Skins and leathers, too?" he laughed. He sounded like a well-fed suckling pig. But he went straight on, inquiring: "Are you going abroad?"

"No."

He stood up and looked out into the corridor. Then he said with the honest mien of a solid husband and father and with a voice of limitless trust: "I heard him talk in Berlin a week ago. I happened to be in Berlin that day. Did you hear him too?"

"No."

"I was very disappointed," he said softly. "He is a clever and cynical demagogue, that's all." He bent toward me and spoke in an even lower voice: "Do you know what he's up to? He wants to lead our people into military adventures! First against the Jews and the Left, then against our former war enemies! He says he wants order and peace. But he has lied so often that you've got to be pretty stupid to be taken in by him!"

The man's lips must have ached, so convulsive was his confidential smile. When he noticed that there was no chance of an answer, he leaned back again and offered me a cigarette. We smoked.

"Travelling man?" he inquired, smiling.

"In rubber goods," I nodded, blowing the smoke toward the steamy windowpanes.

"He really disappointed me," he confided again. "Of course, he is a good speaker. But he has never risked a public debate with an opponent. Do you consider that a sign of courage or cowardice?"

"I don't understand all these things," I said.

I wiped the window. Green, yellow, and red signal lights flew by. Wisps of white smoke clung to the telegraph wires.

"As a travelling man you must hear all sorts of talk." He winked encouragingly. "How can people manage to go abroad nowadays? The few marks you're allowed to take with you don't amount to a row of pins. There must be some way of getting money out."

"I haven't the slightest idea," I said. "My customers never go abroad."

I resolved to get out at Karlsruhe and wait for the next train. I had to get rid of him! As we arrived in Karlsruhe, I reached for my coat.

"You are getting out here too?" the chubby-faced man said, yawning. He stood up and took his raincoat and hat from the rack.

"No," I said. "I'm just cold."

Outside on the platform I saw him take a train to Berlin. He now looked quite ruffled, not a vestige of a smile was on his face, his little cheeks were not shining any more. He had tried in vain. In Fulda he would probably get out again, to wait for the train for Basel via Karlsruhe. . . .

The train rolled on. Again I was alone. I was no longer tired. I was only too wide awake. . . . Had I taken the Kehl-Strasbourg route, I would have been near my goal by this time. But Rascher had explained in his letter that, according to information in Prague, the resorts near the Franco-German border were not recommended for a change of air. . . . So I had chosen a detour. I planned to get out at Lörrach and go first to Switzerland, to Basel. From Basel to Saint-Louis in France was but a short jump. There began exile, but there also began freedom. . . .

Lörrach could not be far now. I buttoned my coat and looked out into the dawn. I tapped nervously on the windowpane. I suddenly

realized that I was seeing nothing of the landscape. What I was seeing was my own life. I was about to leave the country where I had come as a child. At the age of seven I had experienced the war in this country. At thirteen I had lived through the inflation. At twenty the economic depression, and at twenty-six the establishment of the rule by force. They had not been gay, the years of my youth in Germany, and yet I had to struggle against the mad, absurd temptation to change my mind at the last minute and stay here. Of course, I knew perfectly that the idea was absurd. There was no going back. . . .

Suddenly my mind turned to the times I had long thought dead. It was nineteen years ago; I sat in an open wagon. I was a refugee and seven years old. Mother was still alive then. . . . We left Strody for ever. It was in the war, we were fleeing from the Russians. I was fleeing then for the first time, and now I was doing it again. . . .

And I thought of my father. He had left Strody a few years before us. He too had once been approaching a frontier, sitting in a train as I was now. . . . To be sure, times were different then, but he had faced the same things that I was now facing: exile. . . . I saw him before me as he had been the last time I saw him: slight, grey-haired, stooping, tormented by a thousand cares. The vision stuck in my throat. I knew that I could do nothing to help him. Yet I was seized with a romantic longing to be sitting with him now in this compartment, to be setting out on this journey to freedom with him. But then his own life was suddenly between us, his life so very different from mine. And a woman came between us, a woman to whom he belonged. . . . What was Herman going to do? Would he stay in Germany? As soon as I had a chance to look around, I would see if I couldn't do something for him. Father had written to me in Berlin: "Herman is doing well."

Before coming to Germany, Father had spent two years in America. How different our life would have been if he had stayed over there and if we had been able to join him! I would be an

American today. . . . A child may be born anywhere. A homeless child can go anywhere. Children have no fatherland. The fatherland is given them, just as everything else in life is given them. . . .

It could not be much farther now. Soon the train would stop at Lörrach. Control yourself, I thought angrily. I was ashamed—I felt utterly lost. . . . I had not foreseen, when I took this train, that leaving it would be so hard. Again I told myself that in a few months I would certainly return, quite certainly. . . . But I did not really believe it. I only wanted to make things easier for myself. . . . Farewell, Germany. . . . I was leaving my mother's grave behind me. . . . And my poor old father. . . . And my brother. . . . I was leaving behind me a country in which I knew cities, men, mountains, and valleys. . . . Here, as a child I had played "cops and robbers"; here, as a boy, I had worn my first long trousers. . . . Here my ideas and my memories had been formed. . . . I had learned to dream, to think, to speak and write in German. . . . To most people these things come naturally. . . . What do they know of our kind of life, the lives of homeless children? They know nothing. . . . My struggles had been different from those of other children. I had had to learn things they were born with. Nothing had ever come to me naturally. . . . Only the homeless can understand me. . . . With fierce effort I had made Germany mine, and she had made me hers. That today she was disgraced, besmirched, could not change my past. . . . I hated the Nazis, but I loved Germany. . . . And now I had to leave her. . . .

What would become of me I did not yet know. But the unknown seemed easy when one fled from Germany on April 2, 1933. . . .

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